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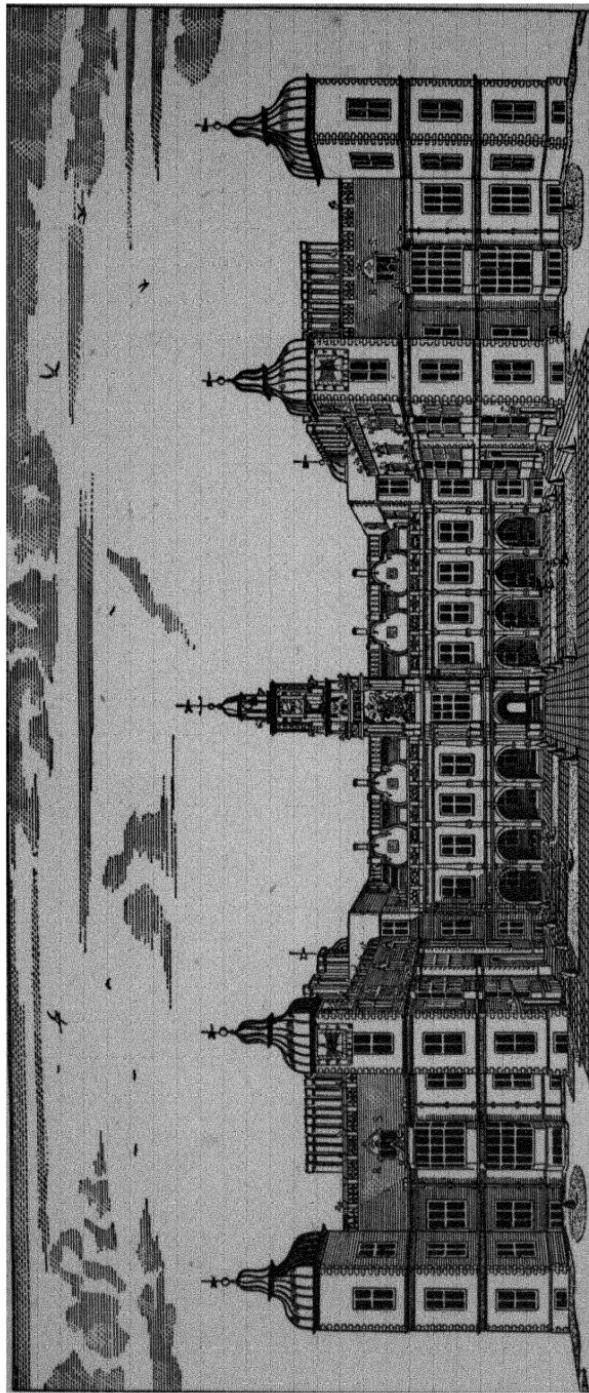
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ALL THE WAY



HATFIELD HOUSE—FROM AN 18TH-CENTURY PRINT

# ALL THE WAY

*By*

VISCOUNT CECIL OF CHELWOOD

LONDON

HODDER AND STOUGHTON LIMITED



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE background of this book is the immense political and social change which has taken place in the last seventy years in this country and in most other parts of Europe. The reaction of this convulsion, with its accompaniment of two World Wars, on the life of the biographer is the chief subject dealt with.

Certain letters and publications have been quoted; and for permission to do so thanks are due to the Marquess of Salisbury; the British Broadcasting Corporation; the Proprietors of *Punch*; the representatives of Viscount Grey; and the representatives of Lady Frances Balfour.

I have also to thank my wife for reading the proofs and Miss Vera Lazarus for valuable secretarial assistance.

CECIL.



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## CHAPTER I

### HOME, SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

I WAS born on September 14th, 1864. At that time my father the second son of a peer, was dependent for his living mainly on an allowance from his father, assisted to some extent by journalism and with no certainty of inheriting wealth. His style of living was, I suppose, that of a minor country gentleman. The town house was at No. 1 Mansfield Street—now pulled down—and there was a smallish country house on the borders of Surrey and Hampshire—the kind of English heath country which I have always loved and to which I returned when I had a house of my own.

That was the position when I was born. But it had completely changed a year later. In 1865 my father's eldest brother died without issue and he became Lord Cranborne, heir to the Marquisate of Salisbury and the estates which went with it. Then in 1866 he became a Cabinet Minister (Secretary of State for India). He had been in Parliament since 1859, where he had acquired a considerable reputation, but, since he was in Opposition, no money. That was all changed by his brother's death and his acceptance of office. He was thenceforward a rich man, and in 1868, when I was four years old, he succeeded to the peerage.

Meanwhile three more children were born to him—a girl who died in infancy and two boys. I do not, of course, remember this little sister, though her death, which was a great grief to my mother, was of some indirect importance to me. We were, on the whole, a very united family. There were no serious or lasting quarrels between any of the seven surviving children. But, in early years particularly, they fell into three groups. The four older ones made two pairs of special intimacy, and the two younger ones also went about together a good deal. I was not in any way isolated, but I had no special confidant, and that perhaps increased my natural aggressiveness. My mother used to chaff me about my having always two grievances and a right!

We were, as I have said, a united family, thinking alike on questions of religion and politics. Above all, our parents were in a position of unquestioned affection and authority. We were never punished in the ordinary sense of the word. In my early years anything like direct disobedience was unthinkable, and I believe that was equally true of my brothers and sisters. If any restraint was required, a glance from my mother was enough to put an end to any bad behaviour. On the other hand, there were

very few rules. I have heard my mother express complete disbelief in any rigid system of education. Precept was no doubt necessary, but example was what chiefly mattered. The main thing inculcated as early as possible was that every child was responsible for his own thoughts and actions. Though, so long as the children were young, my mother was the chief executive officer, yet I have no doubt that the general policy pursued originated with my father. He had an almost fanatical belief in personal liberty. Discipline by one human being over another was extremely repugnant to him. He recognised, of course, that where common action was necessary, obedience to orders was essential. In the fighting services or in party politics disciplinary action could not be avoided. Even then, when he was Prime Minister of a Cabinet or Leader of a party, he would explain to his followers his view as to what should be done as clearly and forcibly as he could, but if some of them were recalcitrant, it was only in extreme cases that he thought it right to proceed farther.<sup>1</sup> He carried the same principles into family life, and so did my mother, with the modification that if she was displeased with any of her children she did not hesitate to show it by complete silence or formal civility. In practice that plan was very effective.

It was part of this system that there was no censorship on our reading. There is a fairly large library at Hatfield, and we were allowed to read any book we found in it. That applied not only to serious literature but to novels as well. In particular, as we grew up we were encouraged to read the ordinary French novels of the day, such as George Sand, Henri Greville, Gaboriau, Boisgobey, etc., and, in particular, Cherbuliez. On the other hand, my mother read out to us Scott's novels, which were at that time more popular than they are now. Certainly they gave me great delight, and have continued to do so throughout my life. They were diversified occasionally by sentimental stories, like one called "Harry and Archie". But the scene of lamentation and woe in the whole family caused by this experiment was almost comically acute, and it was not repeated.

A similar course was pursued with regard to religion. There was not much direct instruction. My mother read out, for a short time daily, books of elementary theology—called, generically, "Holy". There were also daily Morning Prayers read in the chapel of Hatfield House and Evensong on Sundays. I do not remember when I began to attend these services, but it must have been pretty early, though in form always voluntarily. Later on, when we began to go to church, we usually went out before the sermon, unless we particularly wished to stay, and from a very early age we

<sup>1</sup> Readers of the "Life" by my sister will remember the great forbearance he showed in the controversies with Lord Randolph Churchill.

were encouraged to read the Bible to ourselves. I remember my mother suggesting to me that it was better to read a definite portion—say twenty verses—morning and evening, a practice which I have found of great value. When I was twelve years old I was confirmed, having been prepared by Dr. Brewer, who was at that time the Librarian at Hatfield. He was a very learned historian, with a remarkable admiration for the Tudors. He frequently talked of them as if he had known them personally. Indeed, when he referred to “The King”, that meant Henry VIII. To me he talked of my Elizabethan ancestors and their attitude to Christianity, and urged me to learn the Church Catechism by heart, which he said I should find very useful in after life. After Confirmation direct religious instruction by my parents ceased, though the subject was frequently discussed, as were many other topics. Indeed, apart from what I learned from tutors and at school, the greater part of such information as I acquired when a boy came from family discussions or talk with my parents. I read very little outside my lessons. I played the ordinary games, especially tennis and lawn tennis, but athletically we were not remarkable. Indeed, I believe I may claim that I was the least incompetent of the family, for I did play tennis for my University. But, on the other hand, I was a very poor sportsman. I disliked riding, I cared little for walking and skating and less for running, and I was a very bad shot with a fowling-piece and still worse with a rifle. It is true that I became a third-rate golf player and an even less successful fisherman. But that was later on.

I look back on my boyhood at Hatfield with great delight. I dimly remember my first arrival there in the gloom of a November evening. But my general recollection is of a very cheerful and crowded family life. Besides us seven children, cousins were often there, especially for Christmas. Chief among them were the four children—two boys and two girls—belonging to my uncle, Walter Cocks, an India Office official, and his wife, my mother’s sister—Aunt Bella. Then there was my uncle Cecil Alderson, my mother’s brother, with several children, he being the most youthful of them and an indefatigable player of all games; my rather severe Uncle Eustace and his sons and daughter, and Mrs. Frank Alderson and her son, now Sir Edward Alderson. To these must be added the somewhat older clan of the Beresford-Hopes, the children of my father’s sister, Aunt Mildred and Uncle Alexander—led by Louisa, married to Haliburton Campbell, and, above all, the Balfours, headed by Arthur, who was more like an elder brother than a cousin. These—or a selection of them—filled the house at Christmas, and during the holidays we skated and played tennis in the day-time and danced and acted charades after dinner. My father had a horror of private theatricals. But that did not extend to charades, provided there was no attempt to professionalise them. Arthur Cocks—

now a dignified Monsignor—was a great comic actor and, indeed, a leader of the revels. I have a vivid recollection of him dancing the polka with Louisa Campbell up and down the Long Gallery which joins the two wings of the house, for that was before the days of the anaemic exercise now called dancing!

Then there were ceremonies of a more traditional character. On Christmas Eve there was a distribution to the employees on the estate of beef and beer. I do not remember that my father took part in this, but I dare say he did. Anyhow, I remember very well helping my eldest brother to hand over the beer to those who came to fetch it. It was not to me an attractive occasion even at that time, and it has long ceased. Far better was the Christmas tree, solemnly dressed, and illuminated with little candles. It was attended by the village choir, who sang Christmas carols at the end of the rather dimly lit hall—called the armoury—underneath the Gallery I have already mentioned, and by the children of the family and cousinhood. All those celebrations were rather old-fashioned even then. Yet I think they were not a mere pretence, but did really embody a sentiment of good will. My father took little part in them.

Meanwhile my education was going on. My father disapproved of sending his sons away from home until they had been confirmed and were able to become communicants, as they all did. So we did not go to any preparatory schools—not even as day boys. We had governesses and later, tutors. They were, I think, all fairly good teachers, and I liked all the English ones. With them I learnt some Latin and a little Greek, with mathematics, and French with a governess. Like many boys, I liked to dabble in chemistry, and my father, who did serious work of that kind, encouraged me very much, buying for me any small apparatus I wanted. I think it would have pleased him greatly if any of his children had taken up science seriously. In the same way he helped one of my brothers to take up botany.

However, when I went to Eton, though I still did some chemistry as an extra—and even partly poisoned myself with chlorine—science was very much in the background. Most of my lesson time there was spent over Latin. Several hours each week were consumed in trying to string together Latin verses. I had no poetic talent, so that to grind out verses was at best the same kind of mental effort as doing a cross-word, and much less amusing. It consisted of taking a rough Latin version of the sense required and then banging it about with the help of dictionaries and a volume called a *Gradus* until beaten into the spondees and dactyls necessary to constitute the required hexameters and pentameters. A strangely futile occupation! There were other better ways of learning Latin. We read various Latin authors, some of which were interesting—like Horace and, though he was

difficult, Tacitus. Some of them were made very dull by being read in little snippets of a few lines a week. Under that treatment Virgil became simply tedious. In the result, when I went up to the University after twelve or fourteen years' tuition in the classical languages I was unable to read the easiest Latin authors for pleasure. The same was true of Greek, except that some of the Greek plays were more comprehensible. Indeed, I remember one Eton master praising that part of my work, which shows that the standard must have been low.

No doubt other boys with greater aptitude for acquiring knowledge learnt more than I did. But it is only fair to myself to say that I passed all my examinations well and, indeed, in the periodical "trials" I came out, to my immense surprise, at the head of the Oppidans in my division, only one King's Scholar—or "Tug"—being above me.

I cannot help thinking that the system must have been partly responsible for such a poor result in classical knowledge. Nor did I gain much in other ways from my time at Eton. I acquired a certain amount of elementary mathematics and science. I learnt, too, a little chemistry, as I have said, and some French from one of three masters. Two of them were French in every respect, and wholly failed to keep their class in order. The third had the appearance and manners of an Englishman. Oddly enough, we were taught no English literature, except that as an occasional holiday task we were sometimes told to read a play of Shakespeare—with notes!—on which we were examined after the holidays. Nor do I remember learning any English history. Lastly, we read a little Greek Testament on Monday mornings and "showed up" our answers to Sunday Questions "in writing". The questions were evolved by the Form Master, and occasionally were useful.

These criticisms may seem severe. And I must admit that I may be biased, for I did not like Eton. Compared to my home life it was inevitably less agreeable in every way. The society of other boys, which to many is a great advantage, was to me no improvement on that of my four brothers. Then, as I did not go to a preparatory school, for reasons which seemed—and seem—to me excellent, I was unfamiliar with football and fives and almost with cricket. These were the chief tests for popularity with the other boys, in which I necessarily failed. Football was compulsory in the autumn and winter, and I hated it for that and other reasons. Moreover, as will appear, I was physically not fit for it. Cricket and fives I should have liked, but, being without skill, I had very little opportunity of playing them. Then I was very untidy in my dress. My "chimney-pot" hat, which was part of the school uniform, was never properly brushed, and my other clothes were equally unsightly. That was a serious blot on my school character. The other boys resented my want of neatness in it-

self and also because it was peculiar—and boys, like most other animals, object to anything unusual. The numerous rules of outward propriety were also stumbling-blocks. My umbrella was never properly rolled, sometimes I held it by the wrong end, which only great swells were supposed to do, occasionally I walked on the wrong footpaths or wore an overcoat too soon in the year. In a word, I was a "scug" and, still worse, a rebel to the athletic aristocracy. Further, my House was unfortunate. The House-master was a cultivated gentleman, always very kind to me. But he had not the manner and appearance that command youthful obedience. The tone of the House was therefore not good, and there was some bullying, in which I felt compelled to take the side of the bullied. It was not serious, but it contributed to the uncomfortableness of my life. Nor did things improve much as I rose in the school, till I was for one half Captain of the House. Then, of course, there was no question of personal violence to me. But I tried, for the first time, to play the part of a reformer, without much benefit to anyone. I was supported by the constituted authorities of the school, including the Captain of the Oppidans—one Winthrop—whom I have never seen since, though I was then, and still am, extremely grateful to him. But the evils of the House continued.

In or about 1870 my father bought a plot of land at Puys, near Dieppe, and began to build a house there. It was not finished when the Franco-Prussian War broke out, and so escaped occupation by the troops on either side. After the war was over we used to go there for August and September every year. It was on the top of the cliff, and had a splendid view of the sea. I was extremely fond of it, more so than some others of the family. The bathing was good, with a broadish piece of sand at the foot of a pebble beach, with big chalk rocks on each side covered with mussels and seaweed. My mother thought the bathing very good for her, and we all bathed together in the French fashion of the day—more decorous if less captivating than that which now prevails. There was a little row-boat and a *baigneur*, who was supposed to look after us. There were also several double canoes—called *périsssoires*—from one of which my eldest sister and I were nearly drowned. The sea was too rough and she was swept off it. I was still quite a boy, but I clung on till the sea washed me ashore. She had to swim for it, and after getting her breath by hanging on to a fishing-stake, with some difficulty reached land. I need not say that the *baigneur* was quite useless. Years afterwards, when I was staying at Deauville, I saw a similar accident which resulted in two people being drowned.

One difficulty of the place was the lack of a fresh water supply. We had to rely for drinking on rain-water. In order to store it there was a big underground cistern, some twenty or thirty feet deep, under the lawn in

front of the house. It was paved and lined with masonry, and on one occasion was being cleaned and repaired, the workmen descending through an opening in the lawn which was normally covered by a flagstone. This the workmen had removed, and left the opening unfenced while they went to their *déjeuner*. My brothers and I were playing with our *bérets*, which we were throwing like discs into the air. I was watching them, and stepped backwards into the dry cistern. My brothers rushed into the house, saying that I was killed, and my mother came out. Meanwhile I suppose my fall had been broken by the workmen's ladder, or something of that kind. Anyhow, though knocked quite silly, I climbed out and, bleeding from some bad cuts on the head, politely asked my mother what had happened! I was put to bed, and quickly recovered, except that my neck remained stiff and my natural tendency to stoop was very much increased. When we got back to London my mother took me to see a well-known surgeon called Prescott Hewett, who examined me and said that I had nearly broken my neck and ought to be careful for some time to avoid any violent shock. This accident took place in 1876, and was perhaps the reason why I did not play football in my first half at Eton, and may have contributed to my dislike of the game afterwards. In any case, the contrast between the low-lying banks of the Thames and the cliff breezes of the Norman coast was probably depressing. The house at Puys was in "a very exposed situation", as house agents would say. Here is a reference to September weather there in one of my mother's letters written later:

"It is blowing a fierce gale. It is very cold and the noise tremendous. We have lighted the 'calorifère' and are going to bar the windows. All the bells have stopped. . . . I console myself by stepping lightly into the sea, hand in hand with Auguste" (the *baaigneur*)!!!

Those of us who liked the sea and the "fury of the gale" enjoyed Puys thoroughly. But there were some who did not. For this and other reasons the house was eventually sold to a French buyer and, fortunately for him, but not for the Insurance Office, it was shortly afterwards burnt down. Thenceforward my father and mother took their holidays on the Riviera.

Shortly before I went to Eton, my father, in the autumn of 1876, attended the Conference at Constantinople with the object of inducing the Turks to make such reforms as would prevent Russia from declaring war on them. He took my mother with him and my eldest sister and brother. The other children were left at home, and while he was there I got one of his few letters to me, telling me something of the doings of the

Conference. He explained that the only way of inducing the Turks to do anything was by bribery or bullying, and that the Russians were better at both than we were. Indeed, we could not compete. Of the Sultan (whose predecessor had recently been murdered) he spoke very contemptuously:

“He is a wretched, feeble creature, who told me he dared not grant what we demanded because he was in danger of his life. He is frightened by the divinity students (Softas) who, whenever the Ministers wish to influence him, are sent howling through the streets. They are very picturesque but not in the least dangerous.”

And he goes on:

“They say the Russian Ambassador is very anxious for peace. . . . I hope it is true.”

I think my mother enjoyed herself there. She made friends with a Princess Nazli Hanoum (I hope I have got the name right), who told her she had an English maid who had recently said that she wished to become a Mahometan in order to get on better with the other servants. The Princess had replied: “Certainly not! There is nothing so mean or so common as to change your religion!” This same lady, talking of some individual of whose activities she disapproved, said that he ought to be removed and, when my mother demurred, the answer was: “A cup of coffee and a man less in the world. What is that?”

The Russian Ambassador was General Ignatieff, and my parents seem to have got on very well with him. He had a vivid imagination, which enabled him to enliven conversation by stories which were probably invented on the spur of the moment. One of his staff was a certain Tseretleff, a Georgian “Prince”, to whom the Ambassador always referred as “mon petit diable”.

After the Conference the Ignatieffs visited England, and came down to Hatfield for a day or two. Madame Ignatieff, a very attractive lady, described the English country-house life of the day as she saw it as “Eat and doddle (dawdle); doddle and eat”.

In 1880 my father was very ill and we went to Biarritz for his convalescence. My two eldest brothers were left at home at Hatfield, but I accompanied my parents and sisters. While my brothers were at Hatfield there was a General Election, and the Prime Minister—Beaconsfield—who was staying at Hatfield, said to my eldest brother as the results came in: “This is an incident in your life. It is the end of mine.” It was a smashing defeat, the result no doubt of the Eastern Question and the Bulgarian Atrocities as explained to the electorate by Gladstone in the Midlothian campaign. It was vain for Disraeli to warn the people, as he

did, that Ireland was the topic of the future. Few then foresaw the succession of Irish disorders, the Irish Land League, the National League, the Agrarian murders, the Kilmainham Treaty, the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke and the final conversion of Gladstone to Home Rule.

I left Eton at Christmas of 1881, after I had been there over four years. During 1882 I was in the main reading with tutors for Oxford. But from time to time my mother took us abroad, partly because my youngest brother—Hugh—had been ordered by the doctors to avoid the English winter, and partly to help our general education, which, apart from tutors and governesses, tended to become too exclusively political. With this aim, I remember being taken to Florence and afterwards to Perugia, Assisi and Ravenna. My mother loved sight-seeing; not that she had any special knowledge of the arts, but because she had an unlimited capacity for taking interest in almost everything. It is true that her reading, when I knew her, was mainly of biography and travel. But she also kept herself informed about the books of the day, and was prepared to converse with anyone in any rank of life who came along, for, as she said, she never found anyone a bore. Sight-seeing was a passion, and she was excusably indignant with me and others of her children who could not share her enthusiasm. It must be admitted that I was very insufficiently educated in what is called culture. Music and poetry of the simpler kinds I liked; pictures, if they were not too difficult, but no sculpture. I could not understand what beauty others saw in it. In scenery I did better. I loved the sea, though I was not a good sailor. Its beauty, in both calm weather and storm, all forms of shipping, a naval review or a fleet of fishing-boats going out to sea, the scents and sights of rocks at low water or the thunder of the breakers in a gale at spring-tide were all fascinating to me. My mother, too, liked the sea as seen from the shore, though, owing to an early experience of sailing off the East Coast with her father in a tiny yacht, she hated being on it. But to her the proper study of mankind was man, particularly as a political animal. Naturally enough, we heard a great deal of politics. My father had been in Conservative Cabinets since 1866, and was already recognised as the future leader of the Conservative Party. Arthur Balfour, too, the adored cousin, was elected as Member of Parliament for Hertford in 1874. Both my sisters and two of my brothers—the eldest and the youngest—who later on entered Parliament, were keenly interested in political affairs—elections, debates, divisions, and all phases of foreign and domestic policy—and I shared their views. Naturally, too, eminent politicians were frequently at Hatfield. Gladstone was there at least twice in the early seventies, and after my father became a member of Disraeli's Government in 1874, the new Prime Minister was often a visitor.

He was to my eyes repulsively ugly, very pale, with perhaps naturally black hair. He talked very little in company, but he used to walk up and down the Gallery with one or other of my sisters, pacing slowly, with a slight limp due to rheumatism. Occasionally he would speak of his past life or make some characteristic observation. Once I remember his describing a visit of Bismarck to London in the middle of the nineteenth century and how they two walked about the town till the small hours. Another time, when there was great family anxiety about an aunt who was critically ill and we were sitting unhappily round the dinner-table, "Dizzy", no doubt in an attempt to cheer us, seized the opportunity of something being said about political murders to say: "I hope they won't kill Waddington"—the very respectable but not romantic French Minister. In answer to the mild surprise occasioned by his remark, he added: "Because that would make assassination ridiculous"! I have already quoted his valedictory phrase of 1880.

That Disraeli was a man of genius no one now doubts. Unless he had been so he could never have so overcome his personal and racial handicaps so as to obtain and keep till his death the leadership of the political party which was outstandingly attached to national and social traditions. But to the end he was distrusted by many of his colleagues and followers. My earliest recollections of nursery and schoolroom political judgements placed him as a more dangerous influence than even Gladstone, and it was uncertain down to 1874 whether my father would consent to serve with him again after his experience of 1867. That he did so was no doubt due to the fact that it had been on domestic political issues that the two men had differed. On social legislation, and still more on foreign affairs, they were in substantial agreement, and on these two subjects the history of the years 1874 to 1880 principally turned.

In the spring of 1882 I went to Puys with a tutor to read. The only incident I recall is our horrified reception of the news of the Phoenix Park murders of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke on May 6th. At the end of that month, my tutor—Mr. Wood—and I went up to Paris for a few days, which we spent very decorously seeing one or two plays and no doubt "doing" some of the sights. To me, Paris was never attractive, partly because it meant hotel life, which I abominated, and partly because it was noisy and rather blatant.

We came back to England to find a very disturbed condition of politics. In the 1880 election the Liberals obtained a large majority and took office. They were faced with growing unrest in Ireland, as Disraeli had foreseen. They met it by the time-honoured mixture of coercion and concession. They passed a Crimes Act to strengthen the forces of "law and order", and they began a series of Land Measures, of which the Land Bill of 1881

was the most important, to conciliate the discontented. The plan was countered by the development of an irreconcilable form of Irish Nationalism under the leadership of Parnell. To him and his followers coercion was tyranny, of which the natural consequences were murder and outrage, while the land legislation merely showed that the English Government was afraid. The Government had taken power under the Crimes Act to imprison without trial persons charged with seditious acts, and they accordingly locked up Parnell in Kilmainham Gaol. As this failed to restore peace, they entered into negotiations with him and, in effect, made an agreement by which he should be let out and should use his influence to restrain outrages. Thereupon the Chief Secretary—Mr. Forster—resigned, and in a debate in the House of Commons Arthur Balfour described the transaction as one of infamy. This speech made a great stir. Gladstone replied with indignation, and Balfour became one of the chief exponents of Conservative policy in Ireland. Up to this time, though he had taken an active part in the Opposition as a member of the so-called Fourth Party, of which Randolph Churchill was the leader and the other members were Gorst and Drummond Wolff, he had not impressed himself on the public, as he did by the Kilmainham speech. All this was of thrilling interest to me. He had always been very kind to me, and allowed me, as a boy, to talk to him, with more assurance than knowledge, about his political future. I do not remember what I said, but the purport of it was that I regarded him as capable of a great political career and regretted what seemed to his cousins a want of seriousness in his conduct! In particular we objected to what one of my brothers called his “unfortunate love of music”. In all this I was, no doubt, merely repeating what I had heard from my elders and betters. It was one of Arthur’s fine qualities that, though he was far from indifferent to praise, he never resented personal abuse, and that may have been one of the reasons why he put up with what, in retrospect, I can only regard as my gross impertinence. Anyhow, the fact that he was now one of the chief fighters in the Parliamentary battle much increased my interest in politics.

Meanwhile external affairs had become very acute. There were agitating events in South Africa: the British defeats at Isandhlwana and Majuba Hill and the heroic defence at Rorke’s Drift. Of still greater importance were the events in Egypt. First came the revolt of Arabi Pasha, which was suppressed. This was followed by a rising in the Sudan, led by the Mahdi. Ineffectual attempts were made by the Khedive’s Government to put it down. As these failed, a clamour was raised in England that General Gordon, who had previously acquired a reputation there, should be sent to appease the rebels and withdraw British troops who were shut up in Khartoum. The consequence was that Gordon himself was

besieged there. A great outcry was raised that we were bound in honour to rescue the man, widely regarded as a hero, whom we had sent there. The Cabinet was divided. Gladstone was against action; Hartington, the War Minister, pressed for the opposite policy. Votes of censure were moved in the House, and the Government majority fell to less than twenty.

It was in a turbulent political atmosphere such as I have sketched that I went up to Oxford. Normally the time of the year appropriate for this purpose was after the Long Vacation. For some family reason, which I have forgotten, I did not go up till after Christmas—that is, in the beginning of 1883. My two elder brothers were already members of University College, and I applied for matriculation there also. I was the only applicant, so that there was no regular examination, but something was arranged for me, mainly consisting of a historical essay, in which I satisfied the authorities of the College. The Master, who had rather recently been appointed, was Dr. Franck Bright, and I was told to go and see him, which I did. He was very courteous, and asked me what subject I intended to take for my degree. I told him that I purposed to be a barrister, and should therefore read law. He was not enthusiastic, and suggested I should read Greats—that is, the modern version of the old degree of *Litterae Humaniores*—which consisted of three subjects: the classics, history and philosophy. Whereupon I said that my father had a horror of philosophy. I can see now the Master's shocked surprise as he repeated, with his habitual slight stammer: "A h-h-horror of ph-ilosophy!" When I got home I told my father what had happened, and he protested that he had no such horror. "Oh, Papa," said some others of his offspring who were present, "you know you have!" In the result, I read law. No doubt my father was right in repudiating my version of his opinion. If I had said metaphysics I should have been more nearly correct. Horror is a strong word, but it is certainly true that he regarded metaphysics with great distaste and believed that their study often seemed to the young and foolish a substitute for religion.

My scholastic career at Oxford had nothing remarkable. I passed the preliminary examinations without difficulty and then read law for my degree, in which I obtained a second class. The Law School at that time was not attractive. One of its chief features was Roman law—a very unrewarding subject, particularly for an Englishman. The authorities were the Institutes of Gaius and of Justinian, together with the Digest of the Answers of the Learned. The Institutes were by way of being a general account of Roman civil law, but to a modern youth they were very ill arranged and unreal. No doubt they were historically interesting as one of the earliest attempts at a systematic legal treatise. But they had little relevance to the facts of the present day. Further, they were not the main

foundation of the English legal system as, to a great extent, they were of the system of the Latin and Scottish countries. As for the Digest, it consisted, as we were taught, of selected answers given by celebrated jurists to problems submitted to them by their pupils. The problems were not necessarily based on actual facts, and in some cases the details were as wildly improbable as those of commercial problems set out in mathematical text-books. Nor had the answers apparently any binding force, though I suppose they were quoted, as text-books are sometimes quoted here, as part of the argument addressed to the Courts. We were never told how the legal machine worked in practice, and I have never read any account of it as vivid as that of the trial of St. Paul before Festus and Felix. That was what we should call a State trial, and the proceedings appear to have been fully organised and reasonably fair. I presume no such material in other cases was available. Certainly, if it could have been given us, it would have made the dry bones of Institutes and Digest come alive.

The other topics that I was supposed to study were constitutional law, some particular branch of English law, such as contracts, jurisprudence and international law. Of these, I enjoyed most the constitutional law, which included a certain amount of constitutional history (a little flattened by the "leaden mace" of Stubbs) and such brilliant works as Dicey's *Law of the Constitution*, Maine's *Ancient Law* and Oliver Wendell Holmes on the Common Law—though I suppose the last two really belonged to jurisprudence. Certainly from those books I gained ideas which have been of great service to me throughout my life.

But by far the most important part of my University life was outside the Schools. First and foremost there was constant conversation with undergraduates of my own age. No doubt we often talked of games and sports and, it may be, more frivolous topics. But we also discussed with much fervour politics, history, social conditions and religion. I suppose much of what we said was both foolish and ignorant. But the practice brought us up against the great problems of life and exercised our minds in a way that attending lectures and reading text-books never could have done. If one of the chief objects of education is to teach people to think, I certainly learnt more on that subject from my friends than I ever did from books. Nor was it only with undergraduates that we conversed. The Master made a practice of entertaining the members of the College from time to time, and encouraged us to hear and speak of many things. I remember recounting one of these talks to an older friend, and was told that the Master had given me a first lesson in the philosophy of Aristotle! On another occasion I ventured to say to the Master something about architecture, and was asked whether I had observed this or that detail of

the building I had mentioned. When I replied in the negative, I was admonished that I should not discuss subjects of which I knew so little!!

There were also other Dons whom I knew socially and, in particular, Edward Talbot and his delightful wife and family. He was Warden of Keble, and it became a regular engagement for me to lunch there on Sundays. I enjoyed those meals very much. Sometimes there would be a distinguished visitor, but it was the Warden and Mrs. Talbot who were the real attraction. He used to take one out for an afternoon walk, and was a charming and inspiring companion. He was a curious, awkward figure, but his mind had the "beauty of holiness". Then there were at Christ Church Dr. Liddon, the eminent preacher, Dodgson, the author of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*—those gems of hidden wisdom—and Canon Scott Holland. He was great fun, with startling opinions, and ever ready for an argument. It was the period of George Eliot's popularity, and he told us once that he thought she had so raised the standard of novel-writing that no one would in future be able to compete with her!

Soon after my arrival I was elected to the Canning Club. This was a Conservative discussion society. It met once a week in the rooms of its different members, selected in rotation. The owner of the rooms was president for the night, but the principal officers were the secretary and vice-secretary. The club had been founded some years before by Mr. Auberon Herbert, who afterwards became something like a Socialist! But the Tory ritual which he established for its meetings survived. We all drank the toast of Church and King in mulled claret and smoked churchwarden pipes and, when we joined, had to subscribe to a formula which ran:

"The duty of the Conservative party is to preserve the Constitution in Church and State as at present established. I, as a member of that party, feel myself bound by that duty."

The club had had a chequered career, but had been recently reanimated by George Curzon as secretary, who finished his undergraduate career just before I came up. When I joined it, the secretary was the late Mr. Justice Talbot and the vice-secretary was my brother, the late Lord Salisbury. Cosmo Lang, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who came up the term before I did, was one of its members, and later on its secretary. There were four other similar bodies: the Chatham, a kind of twin of the Canning; the Strafford, a recent invention, and Tory-Democratic in politics; and two Liberal Clubs—the Russell and the Palmerston. These clubs had no formal connection with the Union Society. But in practice their members often took part in the Union debates and served as officers of that institution. In that way my brother was a Union official, Lang was

a president and so was I. Similarly, A. H. Hawkins, C. E. Mallet and A. E. W. Mason from the Russell or Palmerston became, at different times, president, librarian and secretary of the Union. The discussions in the Canning were, I hope, instructive, but tended to be a little dull. I remember only one really lively meeting, which was attended by George Curzon, then visiting Oxford for a day or two. The paper read that evening by my second brother, as it happened, did not please him. I think he denounced it as reactionary, and I believe I replied that George was a Radical in disguise! The Union debates were more lively. Lang was easily the star speaker for the Conservatives, and Anthony Hope Hawkins was the Liberal leader. Mallet and Mason, too, were effective and rather vitriolic, while the late Lord Russell, wearing a bright red tie, represented the extreme Left. The defect of these debates as a training for Parliamentary was that, as the audience came there to be amused, the speeches consisted mostly of rather cheap scores. However, that was not true of Lang, who had already reached his best as a speaker and could induce ignorant and impatient undergraduates to listen with interest to a solid and well-arranged argument.

By far the most vigorous discussions took place not on public questions, but on Private Business—that is, on proposals dealing with the affairs of the Union. There was one controversy which lasted for many terms, if not years, in which I took an active part. It was a rule of the Union that no one should canvass for his election to any of the offices of the Union. Unfortunately there was no definition of exactly what canvassing was, and it was alleged that certain groups—notably, it was said, the Strafford Club—organised elaborate arrangements for the election of approved candidates. This was felt as a great grievance, particularly by those who were not approved, and accordingly a movement was started to make the rule more effective. I joined, and in part directed, the movement in collaboration with the Liberal leaders. There were several debates, in which we did pretty well. But then a poll was demanded, and we were heavily beaten. So my second appearance as a reformer was not much more successful than my first effort of that kind at Eton. However, I was not discouraged, and the movement against canvassing went on to some extent.

It was at that time the practice for the Union Societies at the two Universities to visit one another. On one occasion the Cambridge Union sent down some of its leading members to take part at the Oxford Union in a debate on Free Trade. One of them was Austen Chamberlain, who, as a loyal Liberal or Radical of that date, spoke as an enthusiastic Free Trader. Afterwards, when we were both members of the House of Commons, he used to remind me that at that time I answered him as a Pro-

tectionist. I forget what the Union decided; nor were its decisions then regarded as of much importance, its main purpose being discussion.

Perhaps more interesting to me than either law or politics was the romance of my great friend William Carr. He had come up to University College in the same academic year as myself and, after preliminary occupancy of rooms on what was called the kitchen staircase—rather hot and smelly in summer and not much better in winter—we moved into rooms near one another in the second or back Quad of the College. My rooms were the largest in the College. In addition to the usual tiny bedroom, I had two sitting-rooms—one of which was of quite a good size. It had a considerable bookcase let into one of the walls, much too big for my books. So I asked my father to lend me some from Hatfield, saying that I did not care what they were, provided they filled up the forty or fifty feet of bare shelves. Accordingly, he sent me a whole set of eighteenth century sermons, which did very well, though I am afraid I never read any of them. Beyond this, I had the usual undergraduate furniture, which included two small armchairs and one bigger one, all of which I still possess.

Carr, whose rooms were on the next staircase to mine, was much attracted by the eldest Miss Bright—which showed his good taste, for she had unusual qualities, both mental and physical. She was very shy and retiring, but with beauty of character, emphasised by very remarkable deep brown eyes. At the time there was a rather silly fashion for calling persons and things by names made up more or less of one of the syllables of their usual names, with the letters “er” added to them. Thus Rugby football became “Rugger”; Association “Soccer”, as they still are, and so on. The principle was applied, with modifications, to the Master and his family. He became “the Mugger”, his four daughters were “the Muglets”, and his sister-in-law—Miss Wickham—who kept house for him, was called “the Deaser”, in allusion to the fact that she was his deceased wife’s sister. Carr’s rooms were opposite to the Master’s house and looked into his garden and, by imagining that the “eldest Muglet” might be in one of the rooms of which he could see the windows, he carried on a kind of mystical courtship. It cannot have been very satisfying, and no doubt he contrived other means of meeting the lady. On one occasion, I remember, Miss Wickham came to tea in my rooms and, I think, brought Miss Bright with her. Certainly Carr was also a guest.

The courtship went on until, in the normal course, it developed into an engagement and, after Carr and I had gone down, into a wedding. His father was, I believe, a doctor in the West Riding of Yorkshire, who had retired and, I think, had gone into business. I only met him once or twice, and found him admirable but rather too formidable and inclined to say to

my friend: "My dear boy, you are very young, and consequently very foolish." In fact, Carr was far from foolish. Not only did he take a reasonably good degree, but he gained the chief English Essay Prize—the Lothian—and two others.

After they were married they were in London for a year or two, and then, on his father's death, went to live in Norfolk at Ditchingham Hall. It was an understood thing that I was to be god-father of the first son. But, as time went on, there were nothing but daughters. When the fourth appeared, Carr insisted that I should be her god-father and then, of course, there came a son, and he also was my god-child.

I used to go down occasionally to shoot at Ditchingham, and met there Rider Haggard, who was a near neighbour, full of energy and agricultural reform. Very pleasant it was, much more enjoyable to me than the more elaborate entertainments of the same kind which I also took part in at Hatfield and, later on, at Lambton—though they, too, were very good fun.

Carr made one attempt to enter Parliament by standing for the Morley division of the West Riding. He asked me to go down to help him, which I was very glad to do. It was a hopeless enterprise. There was a solid Liberal majority, resting on a very firm nonconformist basis. Carr had no organisation to speak of. We used to drive out together to some local centre in which a meeting had been announced. We took a chairman with us and sometimes, when we got there, there was no one else. However, in a little time the room began to fill up and we made our orations, at the end of which a resolution of support for the candidate was proposed and overwhelmingly defeated. I need not add that when the election took place Carr's opponent was easily elected.

After that Carr settled down as a country gentleman, taking his full share, I have no doubt, in county work. There are—or should I say there were?—no lives of more disinterested public service than those of such men. He is, I am sorry to say, now dead, but his widow still lives at Hedenham, a village adjoining Ditchingham.

To return to the Canning Club. Its general atmosphere was enlightened Conservatism, which had not much attraction for me. But several of the members became my close friends in after life. Carr was one, Amyas Northcote, the youngest son of the first Lord Iddesleigh, was another. Then there was Talbot, who went to the Bar and practised with considerable success at the Common Law and, more especially, before Committees of Parliament. During the First World War he did valuable work for the Government, and was properly made a Judge of the High Court, where I understand he did very well. He had great ability and a certain granite-like quality of spirit, which made him a rather uncom-

promising controversialist. One of his outstanding peculiarities at Oxford was that, whereas he loved Winchester, where he had been at School, he cared little for Oxford—why I never knew. Perhaps it was too free-and-easy for his taste. Another, to me, rather strange characteristic was that he would never wear a great-coat! He was a complete contrast to his brother—Bertram—whom I got to know very well through George. Bertram was one of the most enlivening men I have ever known, full of gentleness and, in spite of indifferent health, gaiety.

Another member of the Canning was J. A. R. Marriott, afterwards Sir John and Member of Parliament. He was a most useful member of the club and, without being of outstanding originality, could always contribute something to the discussions. He was the reverse of Goldsmith. He may not have had a large intellectual balance, but he always had plenty of small change. But my greatest friend was Cosmo Gordon Lang, whom I loved and admired till his death. He was Liberal-Conservative in politics and spoke regularly as such. He was a very remarkable speaker. Indeed, I doubt if in all the speeches of his subsequent career he surpassed those he made as an undergraduate. They were addressed not to the emotions, but to the reason. He had the power of delivering an admirably phrased and closely-knit argument in such a form that as I have said even the rather frivolous youth of Oxford listened intently. I remember one occasion in a debate on some Irish question, attended by the well-known Home Ruler Member of Parliament, Mr. A. M. Sullivan, Lang delivered an admirable reply, which seemed to me a very effective answer even to so practised an orator as Sullivan. We both meant to go to the Bar, and went through the usual preliminaries of eating dinners—that strange and meaningless survival from the time when the Inns of Court were places of learning at which the resident students absorbed the legal atmosphere and, if they chose, some knowledge of law. In my time the dinners constituted little more than a barrier of delay, expense and inconvenience, which had to be surmounted before a student was called to the Bar. There was also a modern examination in law—not very difficult—which had to be passed. Lang was never actually called, but I believe he, like me, ate the requisite number of dinners and passed the examination. We also both began to sit in chambers as pupils of barristers who were in considerable practice but had not yet “taken silk”. That was the most valuable part of our legal education. Lang was a pupil of Robson, later a Liberal Law Officer. It was during this period that Lang resolved that he would take Orders instead of going on as a barrister. He took advice from various people, including Canon Scott Holland. Had he remained at the Bar he would quite certainly have risen very high, for his mind was admirably adapted to that profession. Others will no doubt assess the value of his ecclesiastical work. I can only

speak of him as a delightful companion, ready to understand and sympathise with all his fellow men. We did not always agree in politics. On the attitude of the House of Lords to the Parliament Bill in 1911 he decidedly concurred in its surrender, whereas, though I had been against its entry into the Budget fight, I thought it ought to see it through. Similarly, he favoured the abandonment by the League of Nations of its active opposition to aggression in the years before the Second World War. He was, perhaps, too much inclined to the middle road—a very natural attitude of mind for an Anglican Archbishop. But it was an attitude adopted by him from deep conviction and was, I believe, on the whole, approved by the majority of his fellow-countrymen from the very highest to the lowest. In his new profession he gradually rose, starting as a curate under Edward Talbot at Leeds and becoming Bishop of Stepney, and then Archbishop of York, ending as Archbishop of Canterbury. Our friendship remained unbroken. He resigned his archbishopric in March, 1942, and was given a peerage. A small house at Kew was also lent to him by the King, and there I visited him in order to address a "Religion and Life" meeting at Richmond with him in the chair. The house was most attractive itself, besides having a back door into Kew Gardens, where we had a stroll before an early dinner. I remember that at dinner we discussed whether the fashionable view that the Book of Isaiah was written by two persons was correct. He thought it was. But the evidence seemed to me very unsatisfactory, and he lent me a book to show me how wrong I was. I am still unconvinced. After dinner we went to Richmond for the meeting. It was held in a cinema theatre, the platform being the stage, which, since it was for the exhibition of films, was very narrow. The front of it was a sunken place for the orchestra, concealed by an apparently solid extension of the platform. Lang as chairman went first, and I followed, and was told to sit the other side of him. To reach my place I stepped out on to what I have called the extension. It was, in fact, nothing but a piece of linoleum stretched over the orchestra pit, into which I was instantly precipitated, carrying down, I believe, a glass for water on the chairman's table. I was knocked unconscious. Lang acted with admirable self-possession, so that there was no disturbance. Assistants found me just waking up, and carried me on a stretcher out of the building and thence to a neighbouring hospital, where I was competently and kindly examined. As no important injury could be found, I was allowed to go home to London in a car. Next day an X-ray examination showed that I had, in fact, broken two ribs, and cracked a third, from which I duly recovered. That was almost the last time I spoke to Lang, who died suddenly in December, 1946. He had done his work, but his death was a great personal loss to me, closing a friendship of more than half a century.

## CHAPTER II

### THE BAR, SOCIETY AND POLITICS

WHILE I was still at Oxford, Mr. Justice Grove, at the request of my mother, was kind enough to take me as his marshal on the North Wales Circuit. It consisted of the northern counties of Wales, including Chester, where the Judge going the South Wales Circuit—in this case Mr. Justice Stephen—joined us, and the two Judges then went on together to Swansea. They were both very distinguished men. Grove had been an eminent scientist, the inventor of a well-known electric battery, and Stephen had written the standard *History of the Criminal Law*, besides other writings on philosophy and politics. A contemporary verse says of him:

"Among our thinkers unattached is Fitzjames Stephen, Q.C.,  
Whose pet aversions are the Pope, Comte, Mill and Doctor Pusey."

Both Judges were extremely kind to me, though naturally I saw more of Grove. He was well over seventy years of age and had become something of a valetudinarian. At the Judge's lodgings he insisted on having a room at the top of the House, lest someone overhead should keep him awake by moving about. At dinner he drank nothing till the end, when he carefully measured for himself three medicine glassfuls of Sherry. He went to bed about nine, and sat from ten or ten-thirty till four, when he adjourned the Court and, accompanied by his marshal, went for a leisurely walk for two hours, discussing the questions of the day and telling stories. Less agreeable was his habit of taking snuff in considerable quantities, of which a generous proportion adorned his judicial robes. He used to tell me that he did it to lessen the tedium of his work in court. "I can stand everything", he said, "except Counsels' speeches. Without snuff I could not get through them."

Till we got to Chester there was not much to do. I remember one long case at Carnarvon—a family quarrel of which I have forgotten everything except what appeared to be the fervid imagination of the litigants. In some of the other places we received the traditional white gloves for crimelessness. At each new place it became my duty—the only one I had—to swear the Grand Jury according to an ancient and impressive formula of which, with youthful exuberance, I made the most.

At Chester the two Judges and their marshals took their exercise by walking round the walls of that very attractive city. Sometimes we joined

forces, and occasionally discussed court incidents. I recollect Stephen telling us that he had tried a man for stealing sixpence from a child. The prisoner had seen it given by some benevolent person, and had thereupon gone up to the child and told him to open his hand, and when he did so took the sixpence. He was convicted and sentenced to (I think) five years penal servitude on the grounds of the meanness of the crime! The sentence seemed to me then, as it does now, very excessive. And yet to make the "punishment fit the crime" is a difficult job. Necessarily its severity depends largely on the idiosyncrasies of the presiding judge.

I remember that remarkable criminal Judge, Hawkins—later Lord Brampton—discussing the contention that one of the reasons for maintaining the circuit system was that it enabled the magistrates and others to see the principles on which the High Court judges administered the law. "Which of them?" he asked. "They all take different views." He used to reserve all sentences till the end of the Assize or Session at which he was presiding, so that at least there should be some proportion in the punishments there inflicted. The subject is difficult. There are so many things to be considered. Public sentiment must not be shocked by too great leniency, nor must it be repelled by undue severity; the criminally-minded must be deterred; the peaceable citizen must be protected, and the convicts must, if possible, be reformed. The presiding judge must have all these things in his mind, and then make an estimate of the term appropriate to the particular case, except only in the case of murder, when he has no alternative from hanging once the jury have found a verdict of guilty.<sup>1</sup> What wonder that there are differences in the way crime is treated by different men.

When I was on the Northern Circuit there were two Recorders, one at Manchester, called West, and another at Liverpool, called Hopwood. At intervals each of them used to make speeches reviewing his administration of the criminal law, and each took the occasion to congratulate the citizens of the city where he was the principal magistrate on the notable way in which crime was diminishing. West was rather old-fashioned and inclined to be draconic. Hopwood was the opposite, and could scarcely bring himself to sentence anyone. I doubt if he ever sent a person to more than a month's imprisonment. Yet each firmly believed that his system of punishment was a chief cause of the diminution of crime! My own impression is that, as far as deterrence is a proper object of our criminal laws (and who can doubt that it is so?), the amount of punishment is of far less importance than the certainty of conviction if crime is proved, and of acquittal if it is not. It is of the utmost importance that every innocent man should feel safe, that he should regard judge and jury and police—yes, and even prosecuting Counsel—as safeguards against unjust

<sup>1</sup> But see now the Criminal Justice Act 1948.

punishment, and not as part of a machine for securing that every crime is balanced by a penalty inflicted on someone guilty, if possible, but in any case on someone. Certainly our law has gone very far in creating barriers to prevent an innocent man from even being formally accused and devising precautions to secure a completely fair trial for him if he is.

There is only one thing more as regards law that I should like to see done, and that is to make an elementary knowledge of our criminal law one of the subjects of general education. In particular, I should wish the older scholars at all schools to be given opportunities for actually seeing selected trials with all the time-honoured and, on the whole, impressive solemnity with which they are surrounded. After all, the administration of English law is one of our most successful achievements, and we have a right to be proud, not only of the ability of our judges, but also of their absolute incorruptibility and, within the limits of human frailty, of their impartiality.

The two Judges of the Welsh Circuit were assuredly entitled to this praise. As marshal, I sat on the Bench with the Judge and, in fact, was very seldom absent from it till the Court rose. I was not bound to do so. Indeed, my only duties, besides swearing the Grand Jury, were accompanying the Judge on his walks, answering any letters given to me by him and sitting at the other end of the table if the Judge gave a dinner. On such occasions he used to introduce me to the company. On one occasion he caused some surprise by naming me "Lord Randolph Churchill", who was at that time very much in the news. However, the mistake was immediately corrected.

On the way down from Chester to Swansea we stopped for a night at the house of a daughter of the Judge, married to the author of *Hall's International Law*. It was a very pleasant interlude in the legal work, and particularly interesting to me because our host pointed out a neighbouring height from which, he said, came a certain Sitsyllt—as Mr. Lloyd George used to call him—who was the ancestor of Lord Burleigh and through him of my father's family. The original Sitsyllt—if that was his name—emigrated to England with the Tudors, settling, I believe, in Stamford as a dealer in meat in the reign of Henry VII. He, or his son Richard, made a considerable fortune, which descended to William Cecil, who, after serving Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary in various capacities, became chief Minister of Elizabeth and was by her created Lord Burleigh. His eldest son was made Earl of Exeter by James I, and his second son—Robert—by a different wife, became chief Minister of the same King and was made Earl of Salisbury. None of Robert Cecil's successors performed any outstanding public service until the seventh earl, who became Lord Chamberlain and was created a Marquess by Pitt in 1789. He married one

of the Hill family, who is repeatedly mentioned as "Dow" (Dowager) Sally by Creevy and was a great Tory hostess of her day, as is described in the "Life" by my sister. She was burnt in the fire which destroyed a large part of Hatfield House in 1835. Her son, my grandfather, was a Tory Minister. He married first a Miss Gascoyne—an heiress and a close friend of the Duke of Wellington—and secondly Lady Mary Sackville-West, later Lady Derby. He was succeeded, as I have said, by my father in 1868.

From the Halls' house we went on to Swansea, where we lodged in the Judge's lodgings with Mr. Justice Stephen and his marshal. Stephen was a big, burly man with a rather aggressive manner and strong opinions which he saw no reason to conceal. The Stephens were an Evangelical family, but the Judge and his brother, the well-known author, Leslie Stephen, no longer professed that belief. My Judge, I think, found him a little overpowering. I remember a conversation about honours, in which Stephen said that he valued more than anything the simple "J" which he was entitled to put after his name. But Grove doubted if even that was worth having nowadays.

After a few days in Swansea I returned to London, and some weeks afterwards I was surprised—and pleased—to receive an invitation from Mr. Justice Lopes to go as his marshal on the North-Eastern Circuit, which included the towns of Newcastle, Durham, York and Leeds. Only one of the two Judges went to Newcastle, and Lopes, as the senior Judge, joined his learned brother Cave at Durham, where he was very splendidly lodged in the old castle. Though these Judges had not such non-legal distinction as Stephen and Grove, they had high judicial reputations. Lopes, particularly, was thought to be a remarkably good judge of first instance. He was eminently courteous, and did all he could to make my position agreeable, constantly urging me to see all I could. However, except for going down an ironstone mine near Redcar, I do not remember taking any advantage of his kindness. Still, no doubt I saw the cathedral at Durham and the Minster at York—two of the most magnificent of our English cathedrals.

While we were at York a lady of the vicinity sent the Judges an invitation to some entertainment. Unfortunately she addressed it to "Judge Lopes" and "Judge Cave", "as if," they said, "we were County Court judges!" I forget whether they overlooked the insult and accepted the invitation. I remember on that or some other occasion I asked whether I ought to address the Judge in private life as "My Lord", as of course he is always styled in court. I was told, however, that it was more usual to speak to him as Sir Henry or Sir Lewis, as the case might be.

At Leeds the Judges and their marshals were entertained at a circuit

dinner, at which the leaders of the Bar delivered speeches or recitations. I remember being much impressed by Praed's "Red Fisherman" as interpreted by, I think, Waddy, Q.C. The Judges also made speeches, which were interesting, though one of them thought it necessary to indulge in the mild indecency then traditional on such occasions.

There was one criminal case at Leeds of a remarkable character. A nervous householder was in the habit of having a loaded gun within reach when he went to bed. It happened that he engaged a new cook, and a night or two after she arrived he was woken up about four in the morning by the noise of someone moving in the house. He accordingly got up and, taking his gun with him, went cautiously downstairs. As he came round the corner he saw a figure approaching him, and instantly fired, and found he had killed his cook. He was accordingly tried for manslaughter, when it became evident that he was a highly nervous individual, and the jury acquitted him. But it only shows how rash it is for cooks to get up very early. Few of them would do so now.

While I was becoming a barrister, my interest in politics did not abate. The Liberal Government, which had come into power with a large majority in 1880, had lost much of its popularity, partly by reason of its failure in Ireland and partly by external misfortunes in South Africa and, more particularly, in Egypt. It had passed the County Franchise Bill at the end of 1884, which roughly extended to the County constituencies the household suffrage established by the Act of 1867 in the boroughs, but this could not become effective till the new register was completed in the autumn of 1885. The result was that until that date no satisfactory General Election could take place, even if a Ministerial crisis should occur. Meanwhile, considerable difficulties had developed in the Liberal Cabinet. It consisted, like other Left Governments, of two wings, then familiarly known as Whigs and Radicals. They differed particularly on Ireland, the Whigs—under the then Lord Hartington—being for the maintenance of the existing form of government and the enforcement of the law. Their more advanced colleagues, inspired by Mr. Gladstone, hated coercion and were moving towards Home Rule. In between the two was a small section more advanced than the Whigs but having leanings towards Imperialism, which made them distrust surrender to the Parnellites. Whether these differences would have ultimately developed into a split in any case is uncertain. Probably they would. What actually happened was that the Government arranged, during the summer of 1885, to be defeated in the House of Commons over an important question of military administration and resigned, perhaps foreseeing the difficulties that step would place in the way of their Conservative successors. The latter could not dissolve, for want of a new register, as already explained, and yet it would

have been a great confession of weakness if they had refused office. Accordingly, they accepted office, with my father as Prime Minister, being, in fact, almost powerless in the House of Commons. On one occasion, for instance, when they were challenged about alleged weakness in their Irish administration, their spokesmen—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Lord Randolph Churchill and Sir E. Gorst—made a defence which seemed to their more enthusiastic supporters a mere truckling to disloyalty. I had gone with my younger brothers to Puys, and from there we indited a very fierce remonstrance on the debate as reported in the newspapers, and sent it to my eldest brother in London, who suitably replied. There followed a period of political uneasiness, including the celebrated interviews between Lord Carnarvon and Parnell, in which the possibility of a grant of Home Rule by the Tories was envisaged. Lord Carnarvon was a great personal friend of my father. They had resigned together from Disraeli's Government in 1867, and they had acted together to prevent the House of Lords from rejecting the second reading of the Irish Church Bill. Though they both took office again in 1874, Carnarvon resigned a second time over the Eastern Question, and he now resigned a third time over Home Rule. He was a highly cultivated and apparently rather nervous man, with a curious little permanent cough. Though he undoubtedly acted from the highest motives, his temperament was inconsistent with the working of the party system.

Meanwhile, it was evident to observers that there were considerable searchings of heart among the Liberal leaders. The General Election took place in the autumn of 1885. The Conservatives gained considerably in the boroughs. But the new county electors supported the party which had given them the vote. The result was that the Parnellites, who swept the south and west of Ireland, held the balance. The Liberals were more numerous than the Conservatives. But neither had a majority if the Parnellites voted with their opponents. Accordingly, the Conservative Government was defeated on the Address at the beginning of 1886 and resigned. Mr. Gladstone took office without several of his old colleagues and brought in the Home Rule Bill, which, after prolonged debates and parliamentary manoeuvres, was defeated in the House of Commons on Second Reading by a majority of thirty on June 8th.

I was at Oxford at the time, but my parents and some of the family were at Hatfield awaiting the result. It had been arranged that a telegram should be sent as soon as it was known, and the officials of the post office had agreed to keep the post office open to receive it. The following picture of the scene at Hatfield House, written by my cousin, Frances Balfour, the wife of Arthur Balfour's brother Eustace, may be of interest. She was the daughter of the then Duke of Argyll and very like him, with the most

gorgeous red-gold hair I have ever seen. Her features were regular and, indeed, she would have been a beautiful woman but for her almost tiny figure and her lameness, due to an accident in childhood. She had a fiery temper, which unhappily got her into trouble with many of her best friends and relations, though my sister Maud and I, and some others, never quarrelled with her seriously. This is what she writes on the day after the defeat of the Home Rule Bill:—

“The house-party vanished by 9.30, and then we settled down to live through the evening. Your father and I played billiards. I, far too shaky, was beaten by twenty. Went down and found . . . your mother, who had just finished a rubber. It was only 11.30. . . . Linkey [my youngest brother] and I played Backgammon, Go-bang and, finally, Beggar-my-neighbour. . . . Eustace [her husband] came down by the midnight train . . . and wandered out on to the Terrace. We agreed not to wait after 3 a.m., when Eustace shouted through the window: ‘Telegram’; we rushed out to the Hall and met Linkey, shrieking wildly and incoherently, but obviously triumphantly: ‘Thirty or thirty-one. . . .’ Your father joined us . . . excited and stroking the cat (a little Persian called Bul-Bul), talked only to her. His first words were: ‘Too good! The old sinner will resign. . . .’ ”

Parliament was dissolved, and I, who had just taken my degree, went down to electioneer for my eldest brother in the Darwen division of Lancashire. At the election of 1885 he had got in with a majority of five votes. Without the Roman Catholic vote he would certainly have been defeated. He received it largely on account of his support for religious education in the elementary schools. Darwen was a constituency which took its politics very seriously. Almost every man, woman and child had strong views on the questions of the day. We stayed in the house of a Mr. Philip Grahame, a retired clergyman of strong Tory opinions. He had a phrase about Liberal leaders. “Such a one,” he would say, “in another condition of life would have been a footpad.” There was a second retired clergyman called Greenwood, who was also a pillar of the constitution. Darwen is—or was—a long, narrow town, consisting, practically, of a single street some one or two miles long. Greenwood lived at one end and Grahame at the other and, with the assistance of a singularly able agent called Wraith, they had dominated the Conservative forces.

All sorts of people came to help us, including Professor Goldwin Smith—an earnest Radical, who had settled in Canada and had there advocated its absorption by the United States, which he regarded as imminent. He was, however, I forget why, a vehement opponent of

**Irish Home Rule.** In the end my brother was returned by a fair majority, and I resumed my legal studies. I had already received more than one invitation to stand as a Conservative candidate, which I had declined with the decided approval of my father. It was, of course, long before the institution of payment for Members of Parliament, and my father thought for a man to rely for his income upon obtaining office was an objectionable arrangement.

In 1886 I became for some months nominally one of my father's secretaries. I say nominally, for I really had nothing to do, partly, no doubt, because he had other secretaries much more competent and experienced than myself. But that was not the only reason. No father could have been more delightful to his children. He took great interest in all their affairs, gave them all possible encouragement if they showed any interest in serious matters and, if they asked for it—but not otherwise—was ready to give them advice. But he could not delegate any of his own work to them or, indeed, generally speaking, to anyone else, unless it were some such thing as deciphering a telegram when he was on holiday away from London. Nor could he easily "talk things over". He once asked me, a good deal later than the time of which I am speaking, whether I found it of any assistance to discuss things with other people, and when I said I did, he expressed surprise and almost incredulity. The result was that his regular secretaries were not given much to do except ceremonial or routine affairs and the prevention of unauthorised persons from seeing him. That was a function also performed by his servants. There was a story that a colleague called at 20, Arlington Street, where he then lived, and asked whether he was in. The wholly imaginative reply was that His Lordship only saw Dukes and Cabinet Ministers. As the caller—the Duke of Richmond—happened to be both, this bold invention was fruitless. But his secretaries, like those of other Prime Ministers, had to devise better means for the same purpose. Those difficulties did not come the way of an unpaid amateur like myself, and so I had almost nothing to do beyond making schemes for filling up some of the gaps in my education, which in fact I was too idle to carry out.

After a week or two the session, I suppose, came to an end, and we journeyed together to my father's house at Puys. He was a very bad sailor, and so always used the shortest crossing by Dover and Calais. That did not take more than an hour and a half, and he was able, by munching dry biscuits, to ward off sea-sickness for that period. To get from Calais to Dieppe was a troublesome journey. On the occasion I am speaking of we travelled by the night Paris express. That brought us to Amiens by about three in the morning, and there we had to change to a slow cross-country line. Unfortunately, there was no train till about five. The

railway officials would not let us stay on the platform, and the waiting-room was so unattractive that we spent the intervening two hours wandering round the town, surveying the wonderful west end of the cathedral in the half-light of dawn, and occasionally sitting down on benches under the trees in the street avenues. It was a tedious business, and I, at any rate, was very glad to reach Dieppe and drive the two miles out to Puys, where we found my mother and other members of the family.

I have already mentioned that I was very fond of the place. I liked the house and its situation, but even more the life we led there. The house was a largish villa called Chalet Cecil, and was only just big enough to contain the family and a beloved Aunt Pooey—or Poey (a childish abbreviation for Louisa)—with occasional tutors. Several of them were English—one a very pleasant clergyman called Lambert, who afterwards became a highly successful parish priest. Then there were one or two younger and more uncouth individuals who were objected to by my aunt because they helped themselves to tea—a very grave breach of domestic ritual in her eyes. Among the later ones was one called Scott Fox, who became a family institution. He afterwards went to the Bar, and did quite well. He never thought much of me, but he had an unbounded admiration for my second brother, who later took Orders. My brother, in return, explained to Fox, with great frankness, all his mistakes and deficiencies, for which Fox was profoundly grateful.

It must have been a difficult task for a young Englishman to fit himself into a family group which was so clannish as we were. But for foreigners the task must have been overwhelming. There were two of them who tried this job—a Frenchman called Dr. Coppini and a German called Herr Boit. Coppini had been in the French Navy, and to us he seemed very temperamental. If it happened to be a fine day, he would come down to breakfast and dance round the table chanting: "*Comme il fait beau, comme je suis gai.*" If, on the other hand, it was gloomy and overcast, he would wander out into the garden, striking tragic attitudes. In the intervals he strummed on the piano, being particularly partial to the "Spinning-wheel Chorus" from "Carmen". After he left he wrote for a French magazine an account of the family, which showed that he was quite as conscious of our faults as we were of his. I remember only one of his phrases—quite harmless—and showing considerable insight. He called my Aunt Poey "*la tante classique*", which exactly hit her off. I do not know what became of him. He was very confident of his future, often saying, "*Quand je serais préfet*", or some other dignified official.

Boit was entirely different. Coppini was a small, dark man. Boit was large and fair, a great believer in German colonial policy and what we should now call nationalism. He was consequently much shocked if my

younger brother scoffed at his views, concluding harangues, in German and English, with the words: "I am a grown man and you are a leetle boy." His main task was to teach these "leetle boys" German, and he was proud of how much they had learnt in a few months. He recounted to us how a compatriot of his had heard one of them talking German, and asked Boit how long he had been learning it. When Boit told him, he replied: "You are a liar", and "this", so Boit added, "was not by way of *éloge*".

These are only the trimmings of my life at Chalet Cecil. My parents were the centre of it all, especially my mother. She loved bathing and lounging on the sea-shore and was perfectly happy with her children. In London, which did not suit her, she was nervous and harassed. But at Puys she was a different woman, sitting out in the garden with one or other of us, ready to talk on any subject with wit and wisdom, arranging for a picnic along the coast or in the neighbouring Forêt d'Arques, reading and discussing all the travel books and biographies of the moment, chaffing her sons and her husband with unfailing vigour, and indulging in fluent and courageous French with Alexandre Dumas, who had a villa close by, and our other neighbours. One anniversary there was connected with myself. My birthday, on the 14th of September, was the only one that came in the holidays. It was therefore usually the occasion of a picnic and always, if at all possible, of an amateur display of fireworks purchased in Dieppe, most of which went off fairly well!!

To my father the great point about Puys was that there he was almost free from what he regarded as the social disadvantages of office. Visits were exchanged with the British Consul at Dieppe and with the Anglican chaplain there. Beyond that there were often families of cousins who spent a week or two in lodgings at Puys itself, and occasionally other English friends stayed in the neighbourhood. But we did not see much of them. Apart from our one or two French neighbours, whom we met occasionally, we saw very few French people. Most of them took little or no interest in an English statesman. Moreover, they fully recognised his desire for rest and did not attempt to interfere with it. True, from time to time some politician or diplomat journeyed to Dieppe so as to present his views informally to the British Government, and such a one would be invited to a family luncheon or dinner to enable him to do so. I remember, for instance, Count Schouvaloff, the Russian Ambassador, coming on some errand of the kind. He was a convivial person, and took the opportunity of explaining to us how much he disliked Germany, her people and her cities. Berlin he singled out for special denunciation. He had to pass through it on his way from Russia to England, and he took precautions against seeing it. When he got near to it, he shut his eyes, and did not

open them again till he had left it behind. And so, he added in his English, "I don't saw Berlin".

Others there were who came in the same way. But on the whole the seclusion was fairly complete. Above all, my father could walk down the Grande Rue of Dieppe, or anywhere in the country, without anyone taking notice of him. To a man of his temperament that was an immense advantage. On the other hand, he was able to keep in touch with public affairs in London. Official bags were sent over to him by the Newhaven and Dieppe steamer, and were brought to Puys by messenger. It was, of course, before the days of telephones (I remember an ineffectual attempt to manufacture a home-made microphone), but telegrams could and did come very quickly. Official difficulties, therefore, were overcome. But as the family grew up the domestic atmosphere changed. Some of the family found the life and climate too severe. The coast faced north-west, and a westerly or even south-westerly gale blew full on the house. It had been built as a summer villa, and the doors and windows were very large and fitted very badly. Nor was any shelter obtainable in the garden. Trees would not grow, and even bushes were scarce. Then three of my brothers and one of my sisters married, and the newcomers did not all enjoy the physical conditions of life there. So that in the end, as I have said, the place was sold.

In 1887-8 I became a pupil of Swinfen-Eady, at that time in very large practice as a junior on the Chancery side. He had a separate room for his pupils, presided over by R. F. Peterson, who was not a pupil, but a "devil". That is to say, he assisted our teacher—Swinfen-Eady—in his work, whereas the pupils were an additional responsibility. But in form devil and pupil had much the same function. To each of them was given a set of papers asking for Eady's opinion on some legal problem, or, it may be, instructing him to draft the documents or pleadings which would make it possible for the case to be brought before the Court. At first a pupil was naturally very much at sea. In our case Peterson was an immense resource. He explained what the point really was and indicated where we might look for guidance in books or precedents. One piece of advice given to us was that we should learn far more by reaching a right conclusion in one case than by making a slapdash answer to half a dozen. Then, when we had written down our conclusions, we went in to Eady, who explained where we were wrong. I remember being overwhelmed by Eady's knowledge and memory—quoting verbatim from statutes and precedents mainly unintelligible to me.

It was not often we were allowed to see the "human" side of our teacher. But there was one occasion in which it came out. A particular decision was mentioned, and he then told us that it had come up in one of the first important cases in which he was engaged. His Leader was Sir Horace

Davey—a very great man at the Chancery Bar—and Eady went with the clients to a consultation with him. In the course of it his opinion was asked, and he said that he thought the case was governed by one we will call *Brown v. Smith*. Whereupon Davey asked—before all the clients, as Eady said with strong emotion: “Mr. Eady, have you read *Brown v. Smith*?” “Why,” said Eady to us, “I had lived with it for weeks, night and day.” It was still, in recollection of his feelings at that time, an awful moment. However, on the authority of *Brown v. Smith*, the case was won, and Davey publicly acknowledged that the discovery of its appositeness was due to his junior!

After six months in these Chancery Chambers I was taken as a pupil in Common Law by Joseph Walton, subsequently a Judge of the High Court. That was a delightful period. He had great personal charm, an excellent sense of humour, with a faculty for seizing upon the essential point in any case submitted to him. He belonged to one of the old Lancashire Roman Catholic families, and had begun his legal career as a “local” Liverpool barrister. He and his wife were convinced, but by no means bigoted, Papists, quite without that acid touch which sometimes makes the society of “converts” rather difficult. They had a large family —some seven or eight sons and one daughter.

His pupils were all devoted to him, and formed a kind of little society which from time to time dined together under his presidency—very delightful occasions, where we all chattered and chaffed one another. One of us was Theo Mathew (now dead), the son of the well-known Judge, with a large share of his father’s ability, and a genius for caricature. He became a great friend of mine and, with Malcolm Macnaghten son of Lord Macnaghten—a judge (now resigned)—joined me in Chambers later on at 4, Paper Buildings. The two Irishmen were warm allies, though one was a Radical, Home Ruler and Catholic, and the other a Tory, Unionist and Protestant.

It was during these months that I saw something of what was known as London Society. My mother had a strong view that it was desirable for young men to see as much as possible of the young women of the day, partly to give them a good standard of what women ought to be like and to improve their taste, and partly because she thought that when they came to marry they would be more likely to choose a wife well if they had had a reasonably wide choice. She therefore had us all taught to dance and encouraged us to go to balls, which we did. I did not much like the lateness of the hour at which balls then began—never before 11.30 or midnight—because I liked a lot of sleep. However, I could and did make up for it in the morning. Indeed, I remember once, having been to several balls, I slept one night till after three o’clock the next afternoon. But that

was very exceptional. I enjoyed dancing, except for one difficulty. I never could remember what was the appearance of my proposed partner. They were mainly dressed in white ball-gowns, very much like one another, and there is something in my eyes which hinders me from easily distinguishing one face from another. Indeed, there was one young lady with whom I frequently danced because, unlike the others, she wore a blue dress. In those days it was becoming increasingly the fashion for young married women to dance. Indeed, at a "smart" ball they were a marked feature. But I was rather afraid of them feeling, perhaps, as the moon did about the sun in *The Walrus and the Carpenter*.

In politics the great event was the resignation of Randolph Churchill in January of 1887, followed by the sudden death of the Foreign Secretary—Lord Iddesleigh—hastened by a miserable muddle over the Ministerial changes brought about by that resignation. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach also found the strain of being Irish Secretary, coupled with a growing failure of his eyesight, was too much for him. In the result, Mr. Goschen succeeded Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Balfour became Chief Secretary for Ireland,<sup>1</sup> and my father took the Foreign Office. The arrangements were the subject of a good deal of criticism. But they worked well, and the Government lasted till 1892 without any further convulsions.

Except for going occasionally to a public meeting, I took no direct part in politics. Early in January of the year 1888 I met my future wife—Lady Eleanor Lambton—staying at Clouds, the house of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Wyndham. It was an attractive house, though a shade too cultured for me. One of the family was George Wyndham—a politician and, by temperament, a poet. But the two sides of his character rather interfered with one another, so that, though he was a good speaker, with a handsome presence and considerable ability, he just failed to reach the front rank. He had three beautiful sisters. The eldest was Mary, who married Lord Elcho; their house in the Chilterns, called Stanway, becoming a meeting-place of the celebrated clique known as the "Souls". These were cultivated and good-looking, especially the women. They liked to talk of literature and pictures and music, with a little philosophy. It was not a fixed number, but rather a set of people who enjoyed one another's society, like what Madame de Sévigné calls the Faubourg of her particular friends. Indeed, the only common characteristic of them that I can recall was that they were all admirers of Arthur Balfour. Though I was never one of them, I used to meet them occasionally with great pleasure. Lady Elcho's two sisters became Mrs. Adeane and Lady Glenconner, who after the death of Lord Glenconner married Edward Grey. I do not think he was a "Soul", though two of his colleagues—Asquith and Haldane—would often be met

<sup>1</sup> See page 66.

in that society. Indeed, it was from among their *entourage* that Asquith chose his second wife—Margot Tennant.

Such a group will never be popular with those who are left outside. And accordingly it was the fashion with certain people to sneer at and criticise the “Souls”. I can only say that when I had the good luck to be invited to meet them at Wilton and Ashridge and Panshanger I enjoyed it very much. They had one characteristic, which was that their talk of their neighbours was sometimes critical but—largely through the influence of Arthur Balfour—never ill-natured. Indeed, one of the charges made against them was that they were a mutual admiration society—a charge which is inevitable about a set of agreeable individuals who enjoy one another’s company. A less agreeable habit, from my point of view, was their fondness for intellectual games with pencil and paper.

I have mentioned three country houses in this connection. Wilton, belonging to Lord Pembroke, is wonderful. The great house of grey stone stands in beautiful grounds watered by chalk streams, where the skilful may fish. I will not attempt any description of the house. It is enough to say that it was full of treasures, architectural and artistic. The Lord Pembroke of the day, with his brothers Michael—British Ambassador at Washington—and Sidney, who succeeded him, and several sisters, constituted a family group of considerable social and political importance and great personal beauty. His wife, one of the Talbot family, also a very handsome woman, was a well-known hostess. One of her charms was a certain simplicity of speech, sometimes very remarkable. It was said that on one occasion, when seeing her guests off at Wilton, she found herself near a young lady of considerable gifts who had recently been making a study of mathematics. “Oh,” said Lady Pembroke, “do tell me all about mathematics.” Luckily the carriage was announced and the young lady made her escape.

Lady Pembroke’s sister, Lady Brownlow, who lived at another country house, Ashridge—now transformed into a kind of post-graduate college for budding Conservative politicians—was one of the most beautiful women of her time. I remember being taken by my mother when I was a boy to visit her in her London house. She was dressing to go to one of the “Drawing-Rooms”, which were then held in the afternoon, and we were asked to wait. Presently folding doors were opened and Lady Brownlow came in. I can still remember the thrill of seeing her in all her splendour. It was a magnificent sight.

The third country house I have spoken of was Panshanger—a near neighbour of Hatfield—belonging to Lord and Lady Cowper. He was a typical Whig of the nineteenth century, highly cultured and very intelligent, a martyr to gout, which perhaps accounted for the fact that,

though he was a Minister, married to a woman of striking personality, he never became a political power in the land. Lady Cowper was remarkable for her candour. She never bowed herself in the House of Rimmon. She had a large body of friends, much attached to her, and she presided at her parties with outstanding grace and dignity.

There were, of course, many other hostesses and brilliant and beautiful women. But I saw comparatively little of them. One trifling incident I remember. It was, I think, in the summer of 1887, soon after I had been called to the Bar. I received an invitation to form one of a party for Ascot Races in a house taken for Ascot Week. To have gone would, of course, have meant a big interruption in my work and, after considering it, I refused. I never got another chance and, in fact, have never seen Ascot Races. It may have been a kind of turning point. But I doubt if I should ever have liked racing. I was once, in after years, taken to a race meeting by a Lambton brother-in-law, and though it was fun to be with him and his friends, on the whole I found it dull. Horses are to me uninteresting and incalculable animals. Some of them are beautiful, but I discovered that those I admired were useless for the Turf. Without gambling, very few people would care about racing. The trouble to me about gambling is that to win money in that way gives me little pleasure, and to lose it annoys me very much. It is said that it is a form of avarice. I cannot see why. I believe it to be just a queer product of the instinct of competition. Applied to racing it involves considerable study of horse-history, but in the end success depends far more on luck than on anything else, unless, of course, you cheat! In moderation, no doubt, it is harmless. But those who care for it are seldom moderate. That gambling is a source of a vast amount of perfectly needless misery and a common instigator of crime no one can reasonably doubt. Horse-racing has a kind of glamour, due partly to love of horses and partly to a long, fashionable history, extending at least to Charles II, and including the exploits of such Whig heroes as Charles James Fox, Lord Palmerston, the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Rosebery. Greyhound racing has never had the same position. Beyond these there are of course many other ways of gambling. Fox probably spent larger sums at cards in St. James's Street than he did in racing at Newmarket. And though baccarat and other games of the kind are now comparatively cheap, yet there is always Monte Carlo and hosts of its imitators in London and elsewhere, at which you can get rid of considerable sums of money. And there is the Stock Exchange for those who are determined to get rich or poor quickly on the largest scale.

Anyhow, I did not take to racing and, indeed, had an increasing dislike for mixing up amusement with money-making. When I was at Oxford I was induced to play whist for small sums. Unfortunately I won

at first, and found that I was therefore expected to go on playing as long as the other players wished. I escaped about midnight, and never played again. Later, when bridge became fashionable, I tried once more. But I found that as soon as money came in, manners went out, and everyone took to arguing and squabbling about the course of the game. So I gave that up, too. No doubt hard-working men sometimes find a little card-gambling very refreshing. I have heard a distinguished statesman complain that such facilities for gambling as used to exist at Almack's were no longer to be found. It is perhaps legitimate to remember that this complainant got rid of two considerable fortunes, not, indeed, by gambling properly so called, but by over-optimistic investments.

But I must return to 1888. In the spring of that year I went for a rest to the West Indies with my eldest brother and his wife and her brother. We went in a vessel called the *Para*, thought then to be quite big, though she was only of some 3,000 tons. She was lit throughout by smelly oil-lamps! We landed at Barbados, the least beautiful of the islands that we saw, but, since it was in the track of the Trade Winds, it was not excessively hot. It was my first experience of a negro population, and they did not attract me. But that was probably the fault of my intolerant youth. From there we went in an inter-island ship of only some 1,400 tons to Trinidad, stopping for a few hours at the very lovely island of Grenada. When we reached Port of Spain, in Trinidad, we were invited to stay with the Governor—an invitation we gladly accepted, for the hotel was appalling in its dirt and discomfort. On arrival at Government House we were all very somnolent, having been on the go since about five in the morning. The result was that after dinner, sitting in the veranda, we were overcome with sleep. My eldest brother made desperate efforts to keep up a conversation with our rather stately host, but the rest of us slept peacefully. In spite of this lapse, our host entertained us very hospitably. The climate is not positively unhealthy. But it seems very debilitating. We met one of the residents who had been my tutor when in England. He was then cheerful, with a keen sense of humour. In Trinidad he had become a half-alive shadow of his former self. But the scenery and the vegetation and the humming-birds and the glow-worms were most attractive. Froude's book on Oceania, including these islands, had just been published. It was said to be very inaccurate. Certainly one statement of his, to the effect that here the Church of England was only the Church of the English, was baseless. We went to service at the Cathedral, and found it crowded with coloured people, most of whom stayed for the Communion Service.

From Trinidad we went on to Jamaica, where we were again fortunate enough to be entertained for part of the time by the distinguished Gover-

nor. I remember he told us that it was impossible to induce the Africans to work. Any of them could live quite well on bananas, which grew with little or no cultivation or, as he put it, by stirring the ground with the foot, so they preferred to be idle. We enjoyed ourselves very much, except for one disadvantage. It was impossible to walk anywhere but on the roads without getting covered with tics and jiggers. This was said to be due to the introduction of the mongoose in order to get rid of snakes. That had been largely done, and many of the birds had also disappeared, so that the insects, freed from their most vigorous enemies, increased greatly.

From Jamaica we returned to England by another Royal Mail Steamer, the *Moselle*. She was more comfortably equipped and, I think, slightly larger than the *Para*. But even so she was tiny compared to the Atlantic liners of the present day. I remember that the first sight of England in March seemed a very washed-out affair compared to where we had come from. However, it retained its glamour for us and others. I remember one day, when we were driving in one of the West Indian islands with some of the residents, we passed a little church built of grey stone, on the same model as many such buildings here. It stood in a churchyard, the soil of which was covered with a green herb, looking at a distance like English grass. Our companions burst into enthusiastic admiration. Here was a reminder of England and "Home". Perhaps it is this spirit which has been both the strength and the weakness of our Empire.





ELEANOR CECIL, 1890

### CHAPTER III

#### MARRIAGE AND MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE

DURING my voyage to the West Indies and back I had often thought of Eleanor, or, as her friends called her, Nelly Lambton, and upon my return I sought her out. We met frequently at balls and at the home of her brother, Jack Durham, with whom she lived, and in the course of the summer I proposed and was accepted. It was certainly the cleverest thing that I have ever done, and it has been of supreme advantage to me. There were no family difficulties, though her relations and mine belonged to very different "sets". The Lambtons were a large family, nine men and four women, grandchildren of the Lord Durham of the Reform Bill and, through him, related to the Greys and other Whig clans. Their mother was a Hamilton, one of that numerous ducal family which figures in Disraeli's *Lothair*, so that my wife had an almost endless number of cousins and other relations. She was already a dear friend of the delightful lady who had married my eldest brother, and she was quickly appreciated by my family, and especially by my mother. More surprisingly, I got on very well with her brothers and sisters. The brothers had the ordinary education of the landowning class. Most had been at Eton. Almost all were at one time or another in the Army or Navy. The two eldest—Jack and Freddie, who were twins and, especially as young men, very like one another in appearance, voice and manner—had both been in the Cold-stream Guards. Their father died in 1879, just when Jack was looking for a seat in Parliament, and he lamented much that he had been prevented from standing for one by the "accident of birth". He, like most of his brothers, had read a good deal, and took the usual part of a landowner in the administration of his county. When he had to make a speech he did it well, and I have no doubt that if he had been in the House of Commons he would have achieved a good position there, as his brother did when he was elected. But the principal interest of his life was racing. He had had a most unhappy experience in being married to a beautiful lady who went mad almost immediately after the wedding. She lived nearly as long as he did, so that for practically all his life he was a married man without a wife or the possibility of a regular domestic life. He had tried to get the marriage annulled, but the distinguished Judge who tried the case decided that, though it was clear that the poor lady was not quite normal at the time of the ceremony, yet it could not be said that she did not know what

she was doing and was incapable of giving a real consent. Possibly other judges might have arrived at a different conclusion. There is no doubt that Jack himself during the engagement was disturbed by the strangeness of her demeanour. But I suppose that, on the evidence given, the decision was legally right. In every other way it was disastrous. Particularly it destroyed the worldly happiness of a man of naturally high spirits and of an extremely lovable nature. To me he was always kindness itself. By birth and tradition he was a Liberal and belonged, like his brother Freddie, to the Whigs rather than the Radicals. At the Home Rule split both of them became Liberal Unionists, and if I differed from them at all in politics it was because the course of international affairs drove me more and more to the Left.

The Christmas family parties at Lambton Castle were remarkable occasions. To them came usually several of the brothers and one or two personal friends of Jack. During the day they all went out shooting, either pheasants or wild duck, or even pigeons. At meals they sat round the table in almost complete silence, partly from a kind of family shyness and partly, I think, because Jack's habitual depression did not encourage conversation. A good deal of such talk as did take place turned on racing and horses, which was quite beyond me. Politics and men and women were sometimes mentioned, but not discussed, and other topics were excluded as tending to pomposity and affectation—a not unusual result of public-school education, followed by military training.

And yet to me they were a family of extraordinary charm. In normal circumstances they were wonderfully thoughtful and considerate, avoiding everything which could be offensive, ready to do anything to help if help was needed, extremely generous with money, and in all practical matters out of doors thoroughly efficient. Best of all, they never fussed or asked questions.

Next to the twins came Hedworth, who had a distinguished naval career, the high point of which was his share in defending Ladysmith against the Boers by bringing up there the big guns of the battle-cruiser *Powerful*, of which he was then Captain. The hardships of the siege affected his health, and though after a time he seemed to recover, and even stood for Parliament, I don't think he was ever quite the same man again.

Probably the most attractive of all of them was George, who became a trainer at Newmarket. He had his faults. He might perhaps be described as allergic to money. But socially he was delightful. His presence made everyone happier. When, in our early married life, we had a few people to dinner and George was one we were sure that all would go well. If anyone seemed to be a little "out of it", George would make a point of

have found two men in the profession who had qualities more entirely different. Between them they convinced the jury, who, with but little consideration, found a verdict for the defendant. O'Brien appealed. But Bigham found it difficult to persuade the Lords Justices that there was any ground for his appeal. I remember in the course of his argument he said that the case depended on the interpretation of O'Brien's language. No one could contend that he had directly incited to murder. Whereupon he was interrupted by Lord Justice Fry saying, with emphasis: "You must not assume that." Clarke spoke shortly in reply and, as Danckwerts was not in court, I asked him whether I should say a few words. He cordially agreed to my doing so, and I did. He afterwards said that if Danckwerts had been there he would not have let him speak—which amused me a good deal! Anyhow, the appeal was dismissed. I believe O'Brien genuinely thought himself unjustly treated. No doubt words read in the chill atmosphere of an English court of justice may sound much more violent than they do as uttered on an Irish hillside to an excited Irish audience. But the Land Leaguers were revolutionaries, and easily persuaded themselves that the end justified the means. Some were no doubt quite honest. But Parnell himself was, I think, an unscrupulous man, both in his public and private life.

I finished my time in Walton's Chambers during this summer. With his help I got Gorell Barnes to let me sit at a table in his rooms at No. 4 Paper Buildings and read and note his briefs. He had just taken Silk and had a large commercial and Admiralty practice. He had the appearance and manner of a rough, practical man. But I believe he was really very nervous. Almost all his work was concerned with shipping. In his chambers they told a story of a timid pupil of his who had been given some elaborate papers to study. In the afternoon Barnes came in in a great hurry and said to the pupil, "Tell me about these papers"; to which the poor man could only reply that they were something to do with a ship. Barnes's comment may be imagined.

I found him pleasant to work with. But I doubt if I learnt much from him. While I was with him I began to get a little work in the Parliamentary Committee rooms. As is well known, there are many industrial businesses—like railways and almost all municipal undertakings—which cannot be carried on without the grant of compulsory powers, either to take land or otherwise interfere with private interests. For such purposes a Bill has to be passed through Parliament, called a Private Bill because it deals with private interests. To secure justice for all those affected, such Bills, when they have been approved on Second Reading in each House of Parliament, are sent by it to be examined by a so-called Private Bill Committee, consisting of five members in the Lords or four in the Commons.

Evidence is given before such Committees, and Counsel are heard. There are also other proposals, not in the ordinary sense industrial, but nevertheless directly involving individual interests, to which this procedure is applied. The first issue to be decided is whether the scheme is desirable—in technical language whether the Preamble to the Bill, which sets out the general purpose of the scheme, has been proved. Afterwards the clauses are examined in detail.

Though every member of the Bar, if so instructed, is entitled, unless he is a Member of Parliament, to appear before such Committees, yet as a matter of fact the business is monopolised by a comparatively small number of barristers. It involves no general knowledge of law, since it deals with the power of the sovereign Parliament to set aside law in special cases. On the other hand, there has grown up a certain number of rules and precedents which more or less govern the proceedings there. The Law of Evidence, for instance, is generally, but not rigidly, observed.

Besides the parliamentary bar there is a professional body called parliamentary agents, who are interposed between solicitors and Counsel for reasons which are, no doubt, adequate, but to me have always seemed rather mysterious. The nature of the evidence for proposals of this kind often requires expert explanation. The route proposed for a railway may depend on engineering considerations; and the purity of a water supply or the suitability of a scheme for sewage disposal can only be vouched for by engineers or other men of science. So that the construction, organisation and other conditions of a great undertaking can only be appreciated by a Committee of ordinary Lords or Commoners if elaborated by highly skilled specialists. To meet such cases as these there are what are called expert witnesses, who are sometimes abused as untruthful. The old classification of liars, damned liars and experts is quoted, I think very unjustly. The truth is that such a witness has two functions. He is both a witness and an advocate. In the first of these capacities he may have to state the actual operations that will have to be carried out. He will also have to explain the way in which the scheme will work and meet any criticisms of it from a technical point of view. The main discussion which proceeds on the Preamble to the Bill involves the giving of both kinds of evidence. The promoters of a water scheme, for instance, must show the need for water, the proposed source from which it is to come and the sufficiency and chemical suitability of that source. These are plain facts, and the evidence given on them is, generally speaking, quite straightforward. But it may be that certain people think that their interests will be seriously injured by the scheme, as, for instance, by depriving them of water which they have long used and which is essential to them, and then the distinction between fact and argument is not clear.

For several years I was engaged in such a controversy between the County of London and the County of Hertford. Roughly, London said there was flowing under its soil a great stream of water which ultimately found its way into the sea. Pumping such water could not therefore, affect the water of Hertfordshire higher up the stream. To which Hertfordshire, in effect, replied: What is called a stream is really in the nature of a lake. Every gallon pumped from it reduces the level of the lake, and consequently deprives Hertfordshire of water forming part of the lake under its soil. On this issue a great deal of expert evidence was given by water engineers of skill and experience. The fact that the water was there and could be pumped up for use in London was not disputed. But whether or not that would injure the water supplies of Hertfordshire depended on geological and other scientific reasoning. Unfortunately, argument on this point was given on oath and, in form, by a witness, and not by an advocate. It is the confusion between the two functions that causes the trouble. In the Courts of Law great pains are taken to divide them. The witness states the facts and asserts the truth of them. It is for Counsel to argue what are the consequences of these facts. He should, and usually does, refrain from pledging his word to the truth of the facts, and confines himself to argument as to what the conclusion should be if their truth is established. Even so, difficulties may arise as to how far Counsel is justified in putting forward facts as true which he has every reason to believe are false.

I remember being engaged with two or three leaders in the trial of an election petition. We were for the sitting Member, and one of the charges was that his agent had made payments which, by the electoral law, he was not entitled to make, and that the election must be set aside. When the agent's account book came to be examined it was found that just where such payments ought to have been recorded the leaves of the book had been torn out. The agent was prepared to deny that he had made such payments. But my leader was of opinion that, in the face of that book, he was not entitled to put forward the agent's statement as true. I have little doubt now that he was right, though at the time I was inclined to think that it was for the Court to judge of the truth of the agent's story, and that our duty was fulfilled if we put forward our client's case as his case and not more. In the end, we all retired from the case, and our client was unseated.

In proceedings before a Parliamentary Committee an expert witness is in just the same position with regard to the facts as he would be in a Court of Law. He must tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. He must not mis-state the facts or select only those which support the scientific conclusion he has arrived at. Where he is not stating facts, but

arguing for certain conclusions on the facts of which he is convinced, he is not necessarily chargeable with untruthfulness even if he is wrong. It may well be thought that the system which makes a witness swear to the truth of his argument leads to much misunderstanding. Certainly it would be very objectionable if Counsel were required to swear to the truth of all the arguments he laid before the Court. Indeed, as I have said, he should not even assert his personal belief in them. He is merely to put them forward as the contention which his client desires to be urged on his behalf.

But in the committee rooms, and occasionally in the Courts, the expert is apt to become both witness and advocate, and as long as the distinction between these two characters is borne in mind there is not much harm done. One result is that cross-examination of such witnesses is directed not so much to the accuracy of his statement of fact as to the validity of his conclusions. It becomes, in other words, a dialectical exercise, which may be very interesting. The controversy about Hertfordshire water, to which I have referred, is an example of what I mean. There was no dispute about the facts as to rainfall, nature of the soils, and so on. The question was whether on these facts Hertfordshire was scientifically justified in contending that London was abstracting Hertfordshire water. The debate on this point reached a climax before a Royal Commission appointed to consider generally the subject of the London water supply. The Commission was presided over by Lord Llandaff, a distinguished lawyer, who allowed the Hertfordshire County Council to develop at length its apprehensions as to what would happen if London pumping were not restrained. The argument lasted some time, and though I do not think the Commission in their Report gave any decision on the point, yet it may be claimed that Hertfordshire had so far the best of the argument that its underground water was thenceforward left in peace.

There were other water cases in which I appeared, but they were of more local interest, as, indeed, was the generality of the business of the Parliamentary Bar. Opposition to Tramways gave me many briefs, the main interest of which was that, though the instructions were in the name of residents along the road affected—called “frontages”—they frequently came from the solicitors to the London General Omnibus Company, of which firm Mr. Joynson Hicks—later a Cabinet Minister and a peer as Lord Brentford—was the leading spirit. He sat in Parliament for sometime as a Lancashire member and was a great Protestant. He entered Parliament soon after I did and was at that time not unfriendly to the Unionist Free Traders. Later he abandoned this heresy and, as a good Party man, did excellent service to the Conservative cause. We always remained warm friends, though latterly drifting apart in politics.

Another feature of Tramway Bills was that if they came before a Lords Committee, of which the then Duke of Northumberland was chairman, frontagers were sure of a sympathetic hearing. It was said that the Duke had had opportunities of knowing how objectionable tramways might be. Whether that was so, I know not. In any case, the Duke was an excellent chairman. Indeed, it was the common view in the corridors that the Lords Committees were better than those of the House of Commons. I think that was so, for two reasons. One was that many peers had experience of judicial work at Quarter Sessions, which made appreciation of legal arguments easier for them. Then the ablest members of the Lower House were usually so busy with public legislation that they could not afford time to sit on Private Bill Committees. An observation of Sir Charles Dilke was quoted, which he was said to have made in answer to someone who urged that the House of Commons should not overrule a decision of one of their own Committees. "What nonsense!" said Sir Charles. "Why should we regard the opinion of four of the greatest asses in the House!" That was harsh, and certainly not always true. But generally the Lords Committees were well manned. They were more expeditious than the Commons because many of their Lordships lived mostly in the country and were anxious to get back to their rural occupations as soon as they could. Members of the House of Commons knew that whether they finished their Committee soon or late the tyranny of the Whips would keep them in Westminster till the end of the session. The Lords were under no such compulsion. Indeed, a large majority of the general body seldom, if ever, attended the sittings of their House, so that once they had finished their Committees they could come and go as they pleased—they became, in the political slang of the day, "backwoods-men".

It may have been the consequent impatience of delay which made a few peers—very few—treat Counsel with an arrogant incivility that was very much resented. No doubt members of the Bar occasionally took longer than they should have done in presenting their cases. But I do not think that was common. Those who had few briefs were usually not bold enough to waste time, and those in large practice were anxious to finish the job in hand so that they could get on to another. Time was not usually wasted by the Bar, nor was it saved by treating advocates of experience and ability as if they were troublesome interlopers. The main duty of all judicial persons in hearing a case is to show as clearly and as soon as possible that they understand and appreciate the argument that is being placed before them. It is only in clear cases of abuse that they should try to cut such argument short. This seems platitudinous when it is written down, but it does not always describe judicial manners. I remember a young friend of mine arguing before a very distinguished judge who

showed no sign of interest in the argument. At last my friend said: "I do not know whether I have made the point clear to your Lordship." "That," said the Judge, "you will find out when I give judgement!" In spite of the authority of the learned Judge, that seems to me a perverse attitude to take up. From this point of view most committees gave little assistance to the Bar. This was partly due, no doubt, to that want of continuous attention against which Dr. Johnson warned Boswell when he was going to address a committee on a Road Bill. "They do not listen much," said he. But it was partly due to the feeling expressed on another occasion by a Member of Parliament—namely that he did not pay much attention to Counsel, for they were paid to speak—a view very properly reprobated by Johnson.

On the whole, advocacy before the Committees reached a high level. The leading practitioner, Pope, handicapped as he was by his fatness, and, one must add, by his idleness, was a great natural orator with considerable acuteness and a wonderful flow of language. He was said to have gained three fortunes at the Bar, two of which he lost by speculation. That was also said to be the weakness of another leader, Littler. Certain it is that, though Littler had a very large practice, he was continually in want of money. His great rival—Pember—had no such failing. He asserted that he had made an average of £8,000 per annum for every year since he came to the Bar—a remarkable achievement. Nor was he "a mere lawyer". He was highly cultivated and wrote a good deal of tolerable poetry, though he published none. He had, I believe, a home in the New Forest, of which he was very fond. He only worked during the session of Parliament, almost entirely in the committee rooms. He retired when he was still young enough to enjoy life, explaining to a dinner of his colleagues that he preferred to leave while people still said, "Why does he go?", and not wait until they began to say, "Why does he stay?" But he only lived for about another year. There was a curious jealousy between him and Littler, for they were very different men. Littler had an exceedingly ingenious mind, which unfriendly critics called tortuous. It was sometimes inconvenient when he had a sound and obvious case to defend, for he was inclined to put forward arguments unnecessarily indirect. But with a bad case he often did wonders. Pember, on the other hand, had no particular subtlety. He was industrious, knew his brief well, was a master of making complicated figures lucid, and had a sonorous and occasionally aggressive voice. With a good case no one could beat him. Littler was his senior at the Bar, and they both held a general retainer for one of the big railway companies. I was sitting with Pember in a committee room in which a Bill of the railway company was being discussed. Pember was in charge, and had just begun to intervene when Littler came in and, as Senior Counsel, took the

case out of his hands, to Pember's great annoyance. "That's just like him," he said; "he's as jealous of me as a cat is of a lion!"

There were other men who had a large parliamentary practice. I will mention two or three. Balfour Browne was supposed to make a larger income than any other parliamentary Counsel. He was very industrious and ready to accept and put his back into almost any brief. Then there was Cripps, the father of the present Cabinet Minister, with a considerable practice in the Courts as well as the committee rooms. That made it easy for him to abandon his parliamentary practice and enter the House of Commons as a Conservative, passing thence to the House of Lords and the Cabinet as one of the earliest Labour peers, with the title of Lord Par-moor. Of men of my own standing, there was my Oxford friend, George Talbot, whose father had been a celebrated parliamentary Counsel of an older day. He had a rising practice. When the war of 1914 came he did Government work on a tribunal that dealt with the cases of conscientious objectors, where he achieved such a reputation that he was made a Judge of the High Court soon afterwards. That was an unusual path to the Bench, but I believe he showed himself an excellent judge.

Perhaps my closest friend at the parliamentary Bar was Sydney Holland. His life work was done for hospitals, first for the exquisite little Poplar Hospital, and then for the great London. Of the merits of his administrative work I know nothing. But he had two great gifts. He had a charming voice and manner, the outcome of faultless good-humour, and industry which recoiled from no exertion—palatable or the reverse—in order to gain his ends. He did not pretend to take much interest in his legal work. It enabled him to make a little money, most of which I doubt not went to the support of his hospital funds. As a charitable beggar he was unrivalled, pouring forth floods of letters, written by his own hand, and ready to utilise any tolerably respectable argument in order to get subscriptions.

Nearly all the committee rooms opened on a corridor of the Houses of Parliament, which during the session was crowded with business men, experts and lawyers. Here, when we were waiting for some Bill to come on, Holland and I walked up and down discussing men and things. It was an excellent meeting-place, and gave to the Private Bill practitioners a sense of corporate existence which is perhaps not developed so well in any other branch of legal work, except perhaps on circuit.

One advantage of this common ground was that it afforded one the chance of knowing and talking to some of the great leaders of industry. In this way I came to know Sir George Livesey, the moving spirit of the South Metropolitan Gas Company. The Company had an interesting industrial history. Before 1883 the relations between employers and

employed there had been unhappy. Disputes and strikes were almost chronic, till at last Livesey, who was then the engineer of the Company, induced his Board to propose the establishment of a system of profit-sharing.<sup>1</sup> It was met by a bitter strike, but at last the workers decided to give it a trial. I believe I am right in saying that there has never been a serious dispute since. At the beginning it was only profit-sharing, and that was the position when I first came to be one of the regular Counsel for the Company. Under Livesey's impulse the relationship of employers and employed expanded to complete partnership. First, arrangements were made by which the employees could take their share of the profits in the form of capital in the Company. Then, by a further improvement, the employees were given direct representation on the Board of Directors. Of nine members, six represented the shareholders, two the manual workers and one the clerical side. I often asked how the plan worked. Was there any hostility between the different kinds of directors? I was assured there was none. The workmen directors were usually re-elected, and co-operated with their colleagues on absolutely equal terms. They had full information as to the policy and administration of the business—perhaps the most valuable antiseptic for that poison of suspicion which is at the bottom of many industrial difficulties. All concerned recognised their common interest and their common responsibility. To give one instance. During the early part of the First World War, owing to rising prices, it was necessary to make a corresponding increase of wages. Accordingly, from time to time notice was given to this effect. On one occasion when such a notice had been given, the workers represented to the Board that, in their opinion, the rise was financially not justified, and accordingly it was postponed. Another outcome of this spirit of harmony was the growth of various bits of organisation to improve the amenities of the workers. In particular, a body called the Co-Partnership Committee was brought into existence, before which came, among other things, any dispute or difficulty about wages or other conditions of employment. It is right to add that no attempt was ever made to deprive the employees of the right to strike or their employers of the right to lock out if either side should think such a course necessary. So far that has not been the case.

I gather from the course of recent public discussion that the advocates of nationalisation believe that it will produce all the good-will in industry which I am convinced results from an honest and straightforward system of co-partnership. It may be so. By all means let it be tried. But, for myself, I am a little sceptical. I understand that where there is serious class bitterness, such as you find in many continental countries, the substitu-

<sup>1</sup> See pages 159 and 221.

tion of the State for private individuals as employers may have great advantages. But, generally speaking, I doubt if such bitterness exists in most of our industries. I should have thought that the more common evils were a certain inertness and incompetence among many employers and a want of interest leading to irresponsibility in the employees. Will State ownership cure these evils? It seems to me doubtful. As far as employing ability is concerned, I should expect the public servants would seldom be guilty of such gross inefficiency as may sometimes exist in an old family business. But, on the other hand, the tendency to work by rules and regulations and to follow precedent—in short, what is meant by red tape—is at least as common in public as in private employment. To my mind, the essential thing is to lift industry out of its present position, where the paramount consideration is how far each of those engaged in it can make a profit out of it, and to substitute the conception that they are all engaged in work on which the nation's prosperity depends. State ownership will do little to promote this change unless it is accompanied by definite *responsibility* being given to all those engaged in industry from top to bottom, not merely as national electors, but as being answerable for the success of each step in the industrial process. Financially to put the taxpayer in the place of the shareholder will not by itself bring the worker into those close relations with the management of the business without which industrial success is gravely handicapped.

From my work for the South Metropolitan Company, and particularly from listening to Livesey as he expounded his views to committees with admirable lucidity, I became a very convinced supporter of co-partnership, whatever might happen to the controversy between Socialism and private enterprise, and when I got into Parliament I tried to advocate these views. They were not cordially accepted on either side. Some of the Trade Unionists saw in them a danger to the power of their Unions. That can be true only if the Unions exist to fight, which I do not think is a sound view. Others disliked anything that lessened the class consciousness of the workers, and were attracted by the conception of a dictatorship of the proletariat. All that seems to me continental doctrinairism, and I am delighted that less is heard of extreme views of this kind nowadays. A more common objection is that co-partnership is a mere capitalist device to prop up a moribund and pernicious system of industrial organisation. My answer to that is that the only sound and practical method of progress is to secure what improvement is possible when it is possible, and to leave the remote future to look after itself. The "all-or-nothing" point of view on one side and the "thin edge of the wedge" on the other are equally distasteful. On one point the worker-critics had a strong case. There were instances in which employers had tried to utilise profit-sharing, or

so-called co-partnership, to prevent strikes, which, if such attempts had succeeded, would have left the workers entirely at the mercy of their employers. But these cases were, I believe, rare, and were certainly not the necessary result of the policy in question. Moreover, it has been clear for at least a generation that the working class, being the majority of the electorate, is in a very different position from that which they used to hold and much less in danger of exploitation. It must be added that some, if not most, of the Trade Union leaders were not unfavourable to co-partnership. That employers should be opposed to it seemed to me strange. No impartial person could doubt that the condition of industrial relations, especially in some areas, was unsatisfactory, and that sooner or later some considerable change would have to be made in the organisation. Unless some plan for doing so by agreement were reached, such changes would have to be determined by the electors, as has, in fact, partly happened. Yet the advocates of such an agreement were met by uncompromising opposition from the great majority of employers. To them the adoption of co-partnership meant the limitation of their powers. It might also mean a diminution of their profits, but I do not think that motive was very important. It is power that men care for more, perhaps, than any other self-regarding motive. I remember when I was in the House of Commons making a speech based on the proposition that the man who gives his work for the success of an industry is just as much entitled to share in its control as the man who gives his money. Afterwards I met a very stalwart Conservative in the Lobby, who told me that he strongly disapproved of my views and would prefer full-blown Socialism to any such proposals!! That was not an uncommon view in "official circles". Certainly, co-partnership was not popular in those days, even among the best of the Tory leaders. Arthur Balfour was, I believe, in principle in favour of it. But when we were Cabinet colleagues, and I on some occasion urged its adoption, he used his unrivalled powers of destructive criticism to prevent any action in that direction being taken.

But I have digressed far from the committee rooms. Let me return by saying that there were other "causes" besides co-partnership which cropped up there from time to time, apart from the ordinary arguments for and against a Parliamentary proposal. On one occasion, for instance, I found myself, a little to my own surprise, the advocate of artistic as against more material interests. The occasion arose in a Bill promoted by the London County Council to give them power to prolong the Chelsea Embankment farther up the river. The effect would have been to sweep away a bit of Cheyne Walk, which, to some of the residents in that part of London, was an object of great admiration. I was briefed to oppose the County Council and, as I often did, I told my father about it. He was

surprised that anyone should put forward such a contention as that of my clients. To his mid-Victorian recollection, it seemed unthinkable that a committee would reject a clear improvement on such grounds. However, my clients fought hard for beauty and induced a friendly artist to make a sketch of the locality when it looked its best at high tide. This was shown to the Committee, who took the trouble to visit the spot and promptly rejected the L.C.C. proposal. It was a most interesting discussion.

Before I leave this part of my legal work, I should like to say a few words about two committees which were not Private Bill Committees but were appointed to investigate public questions of considerable importance. The first of them was the Committee of 1897, which inquired into the origins of the Jameson Raid. I was one of the standing Counsel of the British South Africa Company. Their solicitors were the very well-known firm of Hollams and Company, who were also solicitors for Mr. Rutherford Harris, and it was for him that I appeared before the Committee. Rutherford Harris had a bad reputation in South Africa. I do not know what foundation there was for it. But the result was that he was often regarded more or less as the hidden hand responsible for anything that went wrong. The chief task of the Committee was to investigate the connection—if any—between the Government at home, and particularly Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, and those who organised the Raid. Harris was supposed to have been an intermediary through whom the suggested nefarious negotiations went, and it was thought better that he should be separately represented before the Committee. I was instructed that the charge was untrue, and, indeed, that Harris had nothing to do with the Raid. I believe my instructions were correct. No doubt there was a good deal of talk about the iniquities of Kruger's Government and the grievances of the Uitlanders, and when the Raid took place it was easy to construe some careless phrase as having relation to it. My task was, therefore, to keep the Committee from being misled by such a construction. In fact I had little to do. There was no prosecuting Counsel, but one or two members of the Committee were inclined to believe any evil of Mr. Chamberlain. To me the main interest of the case was to watch how helplessly such a Committee carried out its duties. On more than one occasion one of them appeared to have got hold of something which, if pursued, might have helped his main contention. But always, before he had succeeded in establishing anything, he dropped the line he was beginning to take. As I say, there was, as far as I know, nothing of importance to be found out. But if there had been I am sure the Committee would have missed it. Such a committee, without solicitors or Counsel to help them, is a most inefficient way of discovering misdeeds.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an incident in this Committee see page 79.

Years afterwards, I sat on the other side of the table as a member of the Marconi Committee and came to exactly the same conclusion. In that case we sat to investigate various questions connected with the relations between the Marconi Company and certain members of the then Government. In fact, we found out nothing until the accused persons decided to disclose, outside the committee room, what had actually happened, which was quite simply that some Ministers had speculated in shares of one of the Marconi Companies at a time when they were the subject of frenzied gambling. The Government, through other Ministers, was at the time engaged in negotiations with different companies for the possible use of Marconi inventions. But this had nothing whatever to do with the Stock Exchange transactions. In the end, the Committee divided on strictly party lines, the minority, of which I was one, holding—rightly, as I still think—that, though there was not the slightest evidence of anything in the nature of corruption, the action of the investing Ministers was very indiscreet and undesirable. I only refer to this case here because it confirmed my strong opinion that a Select Committee is about as bad an instrument as can be imagined for investigating charges against politicians.

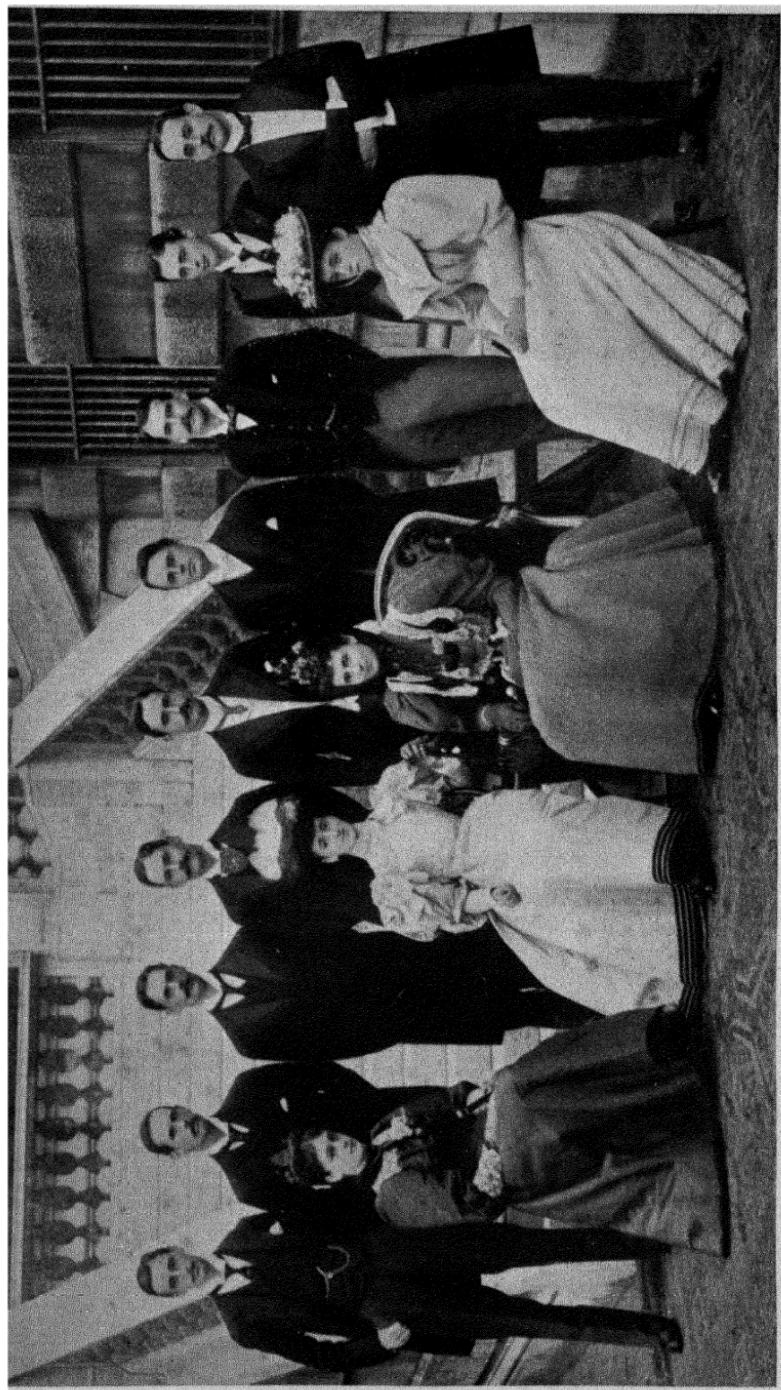
The chief occupation of my life from my marriage in 1889 till my entry into the House of Commons in 1905 was work at my profession as a barrister. I had hoped to get a Common Law practice, and so I did, to some extent. But by far the largest part of my work was at the Parliamentary Bar, which I have tried to describe. With very rare exceptions, such as that of George Talbot, this leads to no professional promotion. Parliamentary practice does not depend on legal knowledge, and therefore the judges are not often chosen from the Parliamentary Bar. On the continent, advocates and judges belong to separate professions. With us that is not so. Counsel are considered as an essential part of the judicial machine. They are expected, within certain limits, to help judges, and not to hinder them. They must never forget that they are merely the mouthpieces of the litigants. It is no part of their duty to decide the case. Indeed, they should avoid expressing in court any opinion of their own on its merits. That is for the judge and jury, if there is one, to decide. Counsel's business is as I have said to put one side of the case fairly before the tribunal. So that, when a barrister is appointed to the Bench, he is not leaving one profession for another, but rather transferring his activities to a different section of the machine of justice.

There are other important public positions open to the Bar, such, for instance, as those of the Attorney or Solicitor-General. But these can only be filled by Members of Parliament and, by a professional rule, no Member of Parliament can appear as Counsel before a parliamentary

committee. If, therefore, a parliamentary barrister becomes a Member of either House, he has to give up that part of his practice. That happened to Alfred Cripps, later the first Lord Parmoor, who was earning a large proportion of his legal income in that way, and it happened to me also in 1905.

Apart from my work in the committee rooms, the only direct professional event of much importance to me was my transfer in 1891 from the Northern Circuit, where I had little prospect of success, to the South-Eastern Circuit, which meant chiefly, in my case, going to Assizes and Quarter Sessions in Hertfordshire and Essex. Here I got a certain number of briefs in minor criminal cases and in civil actions of no great importance. But the chief towns of those counties were convenient to me, both because they were very easily accessible from London and because I could stay in Hertfordshire at my father's house at Hatfield and in Essex with my cousin Lady Rayleigh—Arthur Balfour's sister—at Terling. Work on Circuit was also useful in other ways. For one thing, it enabled me to become acquainted with some of the judges. One was Chief Justice Coleridge, who had great eloquence and a beautiful voice. Another was Mr. Justice Hawkins. He was, I believe, of Hertfordshire origin. Many stories were current about him—none of them much to his credit as a judge. He seemed to regard the whole thing as a kind of game in which his object was to get through his work as easily as possible and, incidentally, to add to the difficulties of Counsel. He would usually decline to say what cases in his list he intended to take, particularly if he knew that Counsel most anxious to get back to other work in London was engaged in one of them. If the Counsel in question went away, then the Judge would, as soon as he could, call on the case and make a great fuss because no one was there, and so on. To me he was always very civil and helpful. At one time he offered to get me made Recorder of London. At another he directed the parties to a case to refer it to me as arbitrator. He asked me to dine with him once at Hertford, and enlarged on his practical hints for success—which were, indeed, quite harmless. One story he told me about a little dog of his, which he was in the habit of taking into court, concealed under his robe. On one occasion it barked, whereupon he looked angrily round the court and directed the police to find out who had allowed a dog so scandalously to disturb the business of the court. But he was clever, and, though he never seemed to think it much mattered what happened in a civil cause, I have seen him take a lot of trouble by cross-examining witnesses to defend a prisoner who seemed in danger of being wrongfully convicted. He ultimately became a Roman Catholic and a peer.

Work of this description did not fill up my time and, at the suggestion



LAMBTON BROTHERS AND SISTERS, MONTAGU HOUSE, 1894



of a friend of mine, called Joseph Hurst, I joined him in writing a book on commercial law. He, in fact, wrote about two-thirds of it, but I learnt quite a lot of law in writing the remainder. I got to know him as the tenant of one of the rooms in Barnes's chambers. He had been a legal shorthand writer, and his firm was very successful. Comparatively late in life he was called to the Bar. But the move was not successful and he was ruined. When I first knew him, he still hoped to establish his position as a barrister. But he had to give it up, and eventually retired to Oxford on a pension procured for him by his friends. When I became a candidate for East Marylebone I made him my election agent, and between us I managed to get in as one of the Conservative survivors of the 1905 Election.

Beyond this there is little to say about my professional life. It followed a normal course. More and more I was occupied in the committee rooms. At first I had put my name up at Fountain Court, which was the chambers of my old friend Scott Fox. But I rarely sat there, being first in Walton's chambers and afterwards in those of Gorell Barnes. When Barnes became a judge in 1892, I moved across to Danckwerts's chambers in King's Bench Walk. Shortly afterwards I had a sharp attack of influenza at Hatfield. After it was over I came up by train to King's Cross and started to walk thence to the Temple. When I had got nearly there, I fainted in Fetter Lane, falling quite suddenly on my back. What happened next I don't know, but I was apparently helped up by a good (though mercenary) Samaritan and I walked sub-consciously to King's Bench Walk. There Danckwerts's clerk—Gough by name—saw I was ill and took me in a hansom to Spanish Place, where we were then living. I remember on the way slowly recovering my complete consciousness and concluding that I was dead and that the streets were part of the next world!! My wife sent for the doctor, who did not think seriously of the case, explaining that the same thing had happened to him. However, we went for a holiday down to Blackmoor to stay with my sister, who had married Lord Wolmer, the eldest son of Lord Selborne, who was my godfather, and had given me his Library of Law Reports. He was originally a Liberal, a Tractarian and a follower of Gladstone, whose Lord Chancellor he had been in 1872 and again in 1880. When Gladstone took up Home Rule, Selborne and my brother-in-law became Liberal Unionists. He was a typical Victorian, rather serious, High Church, deeply religious. He disapproved of cards and billiards on Sunday, but he was in all essentials kindness itself. I once heard him say, to the amused consternation of his son: "Willie, like myself, has no sense of humour!" But he was not without a kind of dry wit. I asked him once what he thought of some legal or political contention. "I should have thought it unarguable," he said,

“except that when I think that of any proposition, someone is sure to start arguing it.” He had been a prodigious worker. Once he was said to have worked straight on, without sleep, for three days and three nights, and when he was in full practice at the Bar he used to take his briefs to bed with him and read them till he fell asleep, and resume reading whenever he woke up in the night. When we went to Blackmoor in 1892, it was just at the end of his life, for he died in 1895, leaving as high a reputation as a Chancellor as did his Tory rival—Lord Cairns. They were two men who, by sure force of character rather than by any special political aptitude, achieved great influence in our public life.

I ought to have mentioned that, in September of 1889, my wife and I went on from our summer holiday at Puys for a visit to the Italian Lakes and Florence. The ground is far too familiar for me to attempt any account of it, and I will only say that we enjoyed it immensely, the more so perhaps because of its tranquillity compared to our home politics. In 1887, Arthur Balfour, as I have already said, had become Chief Secretary for Ireland, and initiated the policy recommended by his uncle, my father, as “twenty years resolute government”. There had been an increase of agitation and political crime in Ireland, and his first Ministerial duty was to pass through the House of Commons a Crimes Act. It was vehemently opposed by the Parnellites, who had at the beginning received him with contempt, rapidly changed to violent hostility. His introductory speech was only a partial success. However, as the Bill went on and his very great effectiveness in debate became clear, his parliamentary reputation steadily grew. Meanwhile, his administration in Ireland was very successful. He re-established law and order, and at the same time, by improving the economic conditions of the people, he obtained a considerable degree of personal popularity. On the Irish platforms he was referred to as “bloody Balfour”, but on official tours in the country he was greeted with respect, if not affection. For this I believe that two features of his administration were largely responsible. One was that, if his subordinates carried out his policy and were in consequence attacked, he always supported them, even though they might have made mistakes. And the second was that he never made any attempt to govern Ireland according to Irish ideas. He was impartial, just, and sometimes severe. He worked very hard to redress economic evils, and he took no part in religious controversies. Above all, he refrained from indulging in the rather sickly praise of Hibernian sentiment and Celtic exuberance which has sometimes been common. Those who tried such methods only found that they were received with contempt by their political opponents and caused discouragement to their friends. It was my ill fortune in later years to find myself out of political

accord with this most attractive of men. But I was in warm sympathy with his work in Ireland and delighted in its success.

In the course of the violent controversy which these events aroused, *The Times* published a series of articles entitled "Parnellism and Crime" to show that the so-called Constitutional Movement for Home Rule had close relations with criminal agitation. Much of the argument was sound and important, but unfortunately it concluded with the publication of two letters alleged to have been written by Parnell, the most important part of which was approval of the murders of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. The publication excited great interest, and Parnell was challenged to bring an action for libel. He declined, and the Government decided that such grave charges against a parliamentary party ought not to be unanswered. They therefore presented a Bill establishing a special Commission to try the issues involved. The Commission consisted of three English judges—Hannen, Day and Smith. They had high reputations for competence and impartiality, especially Hannen and Smith. Day was an able man, but was thought by some to err on the side of severity. He perhaps owed his appointment partly to the fact that he was a Roman Catholic, since it was clearly important to avoid any suggestion that the tribunal was affected by sectarian prejudice.

The trial went on for many weeks. At first it was concerned with the murders and outrages which had occurred in Ireland and the speeches by Parnell and his supporters. This period was resented by the Liberals, who called it "the bloody puddle", on the unsustainable ground that the only issue of importance was the truth or falsehood of the charges in the Parnell letters. That was putting their case much too high, though it is probably true that no Commission would have ever met if the letters had not been published. When the letters were at last reached, it was shown that they had been sold to *The Times* by one Pigott. His cross-examination proved that they were, in fact, forgeries by him, and before his cross-examination was concluded he fled the country to Spain, where he committed suicide. The Commission, nevertheless, presented its unanimous report, in which it rejected the letters, but on the other questions it laid down that the Parnellites had not recommended crime, but had taken action which, in fact, "led to crime and outrage and persisted in it with knowledge of its effect". I believe that history will agree with this verdict, showing once again that if truth is to prevail there is no better machinery for securing that object than a public trial by the methods and in the spirit of English justice. The political effect of this decision would have been much more definite but for the sordid scandal of the O'Shea divorce suit. In that suit Captain O'Shea, one of Parnell's followers, asked for and obtained dis-

solution of his marriage on the ground of his wife's adultery with Parnell. When this became public there was a strong demand, which was understood to be supported by the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church, that Parnell should not remain the leader of the Nationalist Party in Ireland. In fact, the Parliamentary Party had re-elected him as Chairman. But public opinion demanded the reconsideration of that decision. For some days the matter was hotly debated by the Party in one of the committee rooms of the House of Commons, namely No. 15. At the end of the debate a considerable majority decided for his rejection, and appointed McCarthy in his place. Parnell carried on the controversy in Ireland, and various attempts were made to arrive at some compromise. But they all failed. Parnell married Mrs. O'Shea, and a few months later died of pneumonia in October, 1891. Curiously enough, W. H. Smith, who had led the Conservative Party in the Lower House since 1886, died almost at the same time. In the following year Parliament was dissolved. The Conservatives had a majority in England and were the largest party in the new House. But the Liberals and the Irish Nationalists together had a small majority over them. My eldest brother had a vehement contest for Darwen, but was defeated by some two hundred votes. He shortly afterwards became Member for Rochester. I had worked hard at Darwen, and was deeply disappointed at the result.

Gladstone came in again for his last Ministry, and again introduced the Home Rule Bill and the Bill for Disestablishing the Welsh Church. Both measures were bitterly contested in the House of Commons and thrown out in the Lords. On March 3rd, 1894, he resigned. He was then eighty-five years old and, except for deafness, was still vigorous. I never knew him at all well, though, as I have recounted elsewhere, I met him once or twice. He was a great man. One of the last of the Victorians—though Queen Victoria disliked him. About his policy many still differ. He belonged to an age in which all respectable persons went regularly to church or chapel. Indeed, he disapproved of a man as a "oncer" who did not go twice on Sundays. It may be, as the years go on, we shall more clearly see how the greatest years of our country were connected with the religious revival which began with John Wesley and, after passing through the Evangelical and Tractarian phases in the Anglican Church and parallel movements in other Churches, seems to have become atrophied by absorption in the mechanical side of life at the present day.

To return to the Bar, I continued to attend the Herts and Essex Quarter Sessions and the Assizes at Hertford and Chelmsford and had a few briefs, none of which were important. Much more valuable was the opportunity it gave me of staying with Lord and Lady Rayleigh at Terling, some nine or ten miles from Chelmsford. It was before the days of motors,

and driving over there in a dogcart might be cold, but was always exhilarating. Lady Rayleigh was, as I have said, Arthur Balfour's sister, and a very firm ally of mine till the day of her death. Her husband was the great scientist, the joint discoverer of argon. He had a laboratory in which he worked on abstruse problems of sound and other subjects. But he was interested in many other things, including politics and lawn tennis. If I were there for a Sunday, he would take me for a walk and talk freely. He was totally without any kind of pomposity or affectation. Whatever subject came up, he would discuss it in a curious dry manner, lightened by an occasional anecdote told with simple and very effective point. His most obvious characteristic was the complete fairness and impartiality of his mind. It may be that this great quality secured for him in his scientific work a world-wide reputation.

Occasionally I strayed into other parts of the South-Eastern Circuit. I remember going to Norfolk for a case in which a woman was charged with child murder. I had been nominated by the Attorney-General as Counsel for the prosecution, and I appeared in the case accordingly, though with great disinclination. There was nothing unusual about it, and it seemed to be fantastic to treat a desperate act by an unhappy woman as equal to an ordinary killing for greed or passion. However, there was legally no defence, and the Judge—Mr. Justice Mathew—took the view that she must be convicted, a view which the jury—reluctantly, I think—accepted, and she was accordingly sentenced to death, with all the usual formalities—a sentence which of course was not carried out. I had rather hoped that the jury would have found some way of bringing in a verdict of "not guilty". But the truth is that a judge of experience and ability like Mathew generally finds that the jury follow his opinion. There was a time when judges, like Mr. Justice Stareleigh, refrained from indicating any opinion of their own, merely summarising the evidence on each side and leaving it to the jury to decide which they believed. A modern judge rightly thinks that the only fair way of presenting the case to the jury is by letting them see what effect it has had on a trained and impartial mind like his own. If he treats the contentions on each side as of equal value, he may be giving an advantage to the contention which is wrong. No doubt a jury may disregard the summing up and give a verdict contrary to the judge's opinion. That happens sometimes, but I believe very rarely in England and then only if the judge is inefficient. What is, then, the purpose of having a jury? The answer is that as an instrument for securing justice, if necessary over the judge's head, it is not of much value. For in most cases the jury will follow the judge's lead, and when they do not they are usually wrong. Indeed, in conditions of public excitement they cannot always be trusted. In the old days in Ireland juries often refused to convict

a man charged with an agrarian murder on the ground that they sympathised with his political views or feared the consequences to themselves of a verdict of "guilty". Nevertheless I believe that trial by jury is of great importance. It secures that the intellectual atmosphere of the Court shall be on the level of the common man. Counsel have in their speeches to keep such a person in view, and so has the judge in his summing up. Only so will they convince the jury; and to achieve that object they must avoid unfair arguments and, particularly, reliance on over-technical reasoning. These are in legal proceedings some of the worst enemies of justice, and trial by jury is a safeguard against them. But it can work properly only if presided over by able and impartial judges, invested with great authority by public opinion.

In London, apart from the beginnings of parliamentary work, I had begun to have a little general practice. For instance, in the autumn of 1892 I went down to Manchester to appear for Arthur Balfour in an election petition against his return in the General Election of that year. Finlay was the leader, and Danckwerts, Alfred Lyttelton and I were with him. The evidence showed that there had been a good deal of beer drunk in the course of the election. But there was nothing to show that Balfour or any agent of his had provided the beer. One little incident remains in my mind to give a touch of local colour. A woman came to give evidence against the petition, and as she was being sworn, a man next to me remarked: "Ah, she has kissed her thumb instead of the Book!" Anyhow, the petition failed, and we returned to London after enjoying a few days of delightful conversation, in which Balfour bore the chief part. He could talk, or rather make others talk, about anything. Indeed, he was a listener of genius, unequalled in my experience, except by President Roosevelt. Finlay, Lyttelton and even I contributed our share in a way which Balfour contrived to make appear to be full of interest. Danckwerts alone stood aloof, perhaps considering such general talk as mere frivolity.

At this time most of my professional activity was on behalf of others—"devilling", as it was called. Danckwerts allowed me to help him, and when he migrated from King's Bench Walk to chambers in New Court, a modern building to the north of the Law Courts, I went with him. In the same court were the chambers of Sir Charles Russell, who had become Gladstone's Attorney-General in 1892. Through a friend of mine in his chambers—Reginald Smith—I began to see some of Russell's work and when Smith became a publisher I took his place. I was at that time an undoubting member of the Tory Party. I belonged to the Junior Carlton Club, I had acted as an unpaid secretary of my father when he was the Tory Prime Minister, and when I made political speeches in the country

it was from Tory platforms. I therefore had nothing to do with Russell's politics, though occasionally he talked to me of his official duties as Law Officer. I remember that the first important case in which I sat in court with him, nominally "taking a note" for him but really following the case as a kind of domestic critic, was a curious action for libel brought against the British Museum for having on its shelves, and so publishing, a book which the plaintiff thought defamatory. Russell was combative by nature, and took his cases very much to heart. He had just been engaged in the Great Pink Pearl case, which was the universal topic of conversation while it lasted and ended disastrously for his client. He had felt this a good deal, and remarked to me that it was a comfort to be engaged in less harrowing discussions. But that did not prevent him, on behalf of the British Museum, from cross-examining the plaintiff with such severity that Sir Richard Webster, who represented the plaintiff, remonstrated with me against the acrimony which he thought Russell was bringing into a case which the plaintiff had only begun to free himself from certain imputations, and with no feeling of hostility to the British Museum. So when Russell asked me, on our way back to chambers, what I thought about the case, I ventured to suggest that the cross-examination had gone far enough. Whereupon he said, with warm conviction, that he thought so, too, but that it would not have done to allow the plaintiff to appear too much of an injured innocent. It was this readiness to accept help, or even criticism, that made Russell such a delightful person to work for.

In the same way, in another case about the failure of refrigerating machinery in a ship carrying a cargo of mutton, he caused a model of the machinery to be set up in the room where I sat, and asked me to explain to him at frequent intervals how it worked, for he had a curious incapacity for understanding mechanical devices.

But the instance of this kind of professional generosity which was of most service to me was in connection with the Cordite case. That was an action brought by the patentee of a material called ballistite against the Government for infringing his patent by the manufacture of cordite. It had begun while the Conservatives were in Office and Webster was Attorney-General. When the change of Government took place in 1892, Russell, as the new Attorney-General, had charge of it, though Webster was also employed. To Webster the subject was congenial, for he had been engaged in many patent cases. But for Russell it was rather new ground, and he was pleased to have points suggested to him which had not been raised by Webster. As I have elsewhere recorded, he occasioned me some confusion by beginning a consultation with the observation: "I say, Webster, Cecil has been telling me that (on some point in the case) you are quite wrong, and I agree with him". Nor did he confine himself

to remarks of this kind, but he insisted on the solicitors giving me a brief in the case.

Russell had the reputation of being rather ferocious on occasion. I can only say I never found him so. On the contrary, I received nothing but kindness from him, including a most courteous letter to me when he ceased to be Attorney-General, in which he went so far as to say that the work of Law Officer had weighed upon him comparatively lightly owing to my assistance! It is, indeed, noteworthy to me that when I was at the Bar I received much more help and countenance from those who belonged to the Liberal Party—like Walton, Russell and, later, Moulton—than I ever did from those who were then my political friends.

This may be a good place for me to say a word about my political opinions. I remember years later at Geneva, Albert Thomas, the Director of the International Labour Office, saying to me with conviction: “*Après tout, vous êtes Gauche*”. In a sense, I suppose that is true. I have very little attachment to an institution or a situation because it is old. I know people to whom that is in itself of great importance. Any change is to them profoundly disagreeable. If the case for alteration is clearly made out they will accept it, but with reluctance. Others take the opposite view and rejoice in change for its own sake. To them the sweeping away of an old system is in itself inspiriting. I cannot say that I am instinctively of either of these schools. If something seems wrong, I have always been anxious to put it right. Even when I was at Eton I was always a reformer, for I thought, and think, very much was wrong there. When I was at Oxford I tried to re-organise the Union and other societies with which I was connected, and vehemently disapproved of the regulations governing the Law School in which I took my degree. At the Bar I tried to persuade my fellows that some form of professional association or club would be very desirable, and when I became a member of the Bar Council I usually found myself on the side of the rebels against constituted authority. In politics, as long as my father was alive, I followed him. I was opposed to Home Rule, and still more to the violent tactics of the Parnellites. I believed that for Ireland, and still more for England, a close connection between the two countries was desirable, nor have I changed my opinion. On imperial and international questions, I warmly accepted my father's views. Still more heartily did I agree with his opinions on Church matters, and especially on Education. Even on Women's Suffrage I imitated him. Just as he voted with John Stuart Mill in favour of votes for women, so I divided with Keir Hardie in the same cause. He was always a strong, practical housing reformer, and so am I.

On the Fiscal Question, on which I first took a definite line against the majority of the Tory Party, he never held, I believe, a very pronounced

view, and I am bound to say that nowadays that seems to me probably right. I am at least very sure that I should never have quarrelled seriously with any fiscal policy he supported.

Industrial questions were not very prominent in his time. But I am entitled to say that he recommended a great protagonist of co-partnership—Sir George Livesey—for a knighthood. On more fundamental questions I very heartily supported his principles. I loathed class war and class hatred and all that kind of attitude. I believed profoundly in the vital importance of individual liberty, and disliked anything that interfered with the right and duty of each man to think for himself. Above all, I was, and am, confident that no healthy political or international system can be built up except on a religious foundation.

It is true that, since his death in 1903, very great changes have taken place in the world, and especially in Europe. The two World Wars have smashed the constitution in many countries. Emperors or kings have disappeared from Russia, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Serbia, Roumania. Even the Papacy has felt it necessary to make changes in the proportion of non-Italian Cardinals. In his country, though we have maintained the outward forms of our constitution, the political changes have been very far-reaching. The Second Chamber, whose powers were much limited by the Parliament Act, has, by custom, suffered a still further diminution of them. It is doubtful if it will ever lightly reject any important Bill which the Lower House has passed and, it may be, it would do well to concentrate its efforts on criticism and suggestion, in which it will have an important part to play. I still believe, however, in the desirability of a Second Chamber. A single Chamber is an insufficient safeguard against political despotism.

Far more practically important than alterations in constitutional machinery is the passing of political power into the hands of the working class. Before the Reform Bill of 1832 the landowners practically governed the country. By that Bill the so-called middle class were given a considerable share of power, which steadily increased during the next century. The Reform Bill of 1867 opened the door to the working class. But they had little direct representation in the House of Commons for the following forty years. It was perhaps the substitution of the new Imperialism for the old, the intrusion of the profit-motive into the Empire, which first created doubts as to the wisdom of leaving the machinery of government in the hands of the capitalist classes. When this was followed by the terrible First World War, inevitable though that was, political uneasiness was immensely increased. Just after it was over I went for a tour in my Hertfordshire constituency, and was startled to find that even in that

placid and tolerant part of the world there was considerable unrest. It was soon clear that the electoral current was not flowing in favour of the Liberals, the old middle-class party of the Left. It was a Liberal Prime Minister—Asquith—that took them into the war and a Liberal Prime Minister—Lloyd George—that brought them out. A complete change from that tradition was required. At first there was a hope that a remedy against war—the chief demand—might be found in the League of Nations. I cannot forget the profound interest with which crowded working-class meetings listened to expositions of that policy. When it became clear, as it finally did in 1938, that the then Government parties had no real belief in the League and it was allowed to sink into the practical impotence that resulted in the Second World War, the people came to the decision of 1945, by which an entirely new political regime was created.

More will no doubt have to be said about all this before this book ends. I have only touched on it here to explain how I remained a Conservative till the end of the First World War, and, indeed, for some years afterwards, and then felt—like so many of my fellow-countrymen—that the cause of peace could no longer be safely entrusted to the modern Conservative Party. I say modern, because I am convinced that, in advocating the creation of an international organisation for the maintenance of peace, I was carrying out lessons which I had, consciously or unconsciously, received from my father. The following quotation from a speech made by him on November 9th, 1897, referring to the Concert of Europe, will show what I mean:

“Remember this—that the federation of Europe is the only possible structure of Europe which can save civilisation from the desolating effects of a disastrous war. You notice that on all sides the instruments of destruction, the piling up of arms are becoming larger and larger, the powers of concentration are becoming greater, the instruments of death more active and more numerous and are improved with every year, and each nation is bound for its own safety to take part in this competition.

“These are the things which are done, so to speak, on the side of war. The one hope that we have to prevent this competition from ending in a terrible effort of mutual destruction which will be fatal to Christian civilisation, the one hope we have is that the Powers may be gradually brought together to act together in a friendly spirit on all questions of difference which may arise until at last they shall be welded in some international constitution which shall give to the world as a result of their great strength a long spell of unfettered and prosperous trade and continued peace.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Other passages from his speeches are referred to in *A Great Experiment* and in the “Life”

In 1894 Russell became a Lord of Appeal and my professional connection with him ceased. I decided to set up for myself by becoming the chief occupant of Barnes's old chambers at 4, Paper Buildings, since Barnes had become a judge. At the same time my wife and I moved from 3, Spanish Place to a larger house which my father took for me at 20, Manchester Square. About this time, too, it became clear that my wife was threatened with the grievous affliction of deafness. We took medical advice and tried many remedial treatments, without success. It is impossible for me to describe the courage with which all this was borne by her. Perhaps the successive disappointments were almost the worst part of it. It was partly for this cause that we were advised to try if a change of climate would do anything to help. In 1893 she went to Schwalbach. I joined her there, and we went on to the Black Forest as an after-cure. We had been recommended to go to a place called Bad Boll, where one could fish in a little river—the Wutach. It was very pleasant. A narrow, fir-clad valley, a little too shut in, but very attractive, where I learned, mainly from a fellow-traveller called Broadbent, enough about the art of fishing to catch a few trout and grayling. From there we drove about the country and ascended the chief height—the Feldberg. We observed as we went about that the inhabitants were rather unfriendly, and found that was due to the impression that we must be Junkers—the only people who drove in carriages. A year or two later, when we went back there and took our bicycles, we were much more cordially received.

In 1895 came the General Election, resulting in a large Unionist majority, no doubt in consequence of Gladstone's withdrawal and the bickering between Rosebery and Harcourt. In the new Ministry the Liberal Unionists took part, including both the Whigs under Hartington and the Radicals under Chamberlain. But the general social conditions of the country were unchanged.

We went to Gastein that year with my eldest brother—a delightful place, dominated by a large waterfall. It had been the resort of distinguished continental statesmen, and perhaps for their benefit long walks were laid out, often practically level, and at the end of them excellent restaurants where coffee or chocolate and other food were served. The cure consisted of bathing in the special water of the place laid on to the hotel and a great fuss was made about our not taking too much exercise, our doctor saying firmly, "It is not allowed," when we proposed any climbing expedition. The people seemed poor but friendly, the children running after us, begging and, to propitiate us, trying to get hold of our

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by my sister. Cf. also his speech in defence of the Concert of Europe on March 19th, 1897, quoted in Westlake's *International Law*, p. 322.

hands to kiss them—a procedure which compelled my brother to keep his in his pockets.

At the end of this year came the Jameson Raid—a very foolish affair—which, I suppose, contributed to the outbreak of the Boer War. The leaders were captured by the Boers, who agreed to send them over to England, where they were tried before Russell, as Chief Justice. They were convicted and sent to terms of imprisonment.

Latish this year I dined with my cousin, Frances, the wife of Eustace Balfour. She and her family lived in Addison Road. Her brother-in-law—Gerald Balfour—who had married Betty Lytton—had a house in the same street, almost opposite them. Both Eustace and Gerald were away, and I was asked to play the host at a small dinner with her and Betty, at which Asquith and John Morley were the principal guests. I was very shy and, finding myself rather out of my depth, turned the conversation on to the Oxford Movement. Both the statesmen played up very kindly, Morley especially speaking with great admiration of Dean Church, from whose book on the subject he quoted. However, he was not satisfied by his version of the passage, and sent me the next day a copy of it in his own handwriting. Here it is:

“I often have a kind of waking dream: up one road, the image of a man, decked and adorned as if for a triumph, carried up by rejoicing and exulting friends, who praise his goodness and achievements; and on the other road, turned back to back to it, there is the very man himself, in sordid and squalid apparel, surrounded not by friends, but by ministers of justice, and going on, while his friends are exulting, to his certain and perhaps awful judgment.”

That was the only time I ever met Morley to talk to. But after I got into Parliament I used to see him there very often. If he came in while one was speaking he was a most exhilarating listener. He sat on the Front Bench opposite, and registered expressively interest, agreement, rejection, indignation, encouraging the speaker to believe that his words were not thrown away, which is, after all, the main thing to hope for in a speech.

In 1896 my father became Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and my parents went to Walmer for the summer holidays instead of to Puys. The Castle at Walmer is historically attractive. It is redolent of the younger Pitt and of the Duke of Wellington. But as a health resort it was a great contrast to a modern villa perched on the cliffs of Normandy. Walmer Castle lies low—almost at sea level. To my parents, and to some others of the family, it did not seem bracing, and my mother used to date the break-up of her health from the abandonment of Puys.

As far as my professional work was concerned, 1896 saw an increase in

my parliamentary work, but otherwise was only remarkable to me by my definite return to 4, Paper Buildings.

1897 was the so-called Diamond Jubilee, to which came an impressive gathering of statesmen from the Empire and potentates from other parts of the world—the “captains and the kings” of Kipling’s “Recessional”. To me the most striking thing was the great review of the Fleet in the Solent. It certainly was a temptation for a British onlooker to indulge in “frantic boast and foolish word”. Indeed, I cannot help feeling that this year was the climax of the Victorian age. England had never been so powerful. Her sovereign was revered all over the world. Her Empire seemed solidly established. What some thought to be the dangerous Irish Question was more quiescent than it had been for a generation. Her Fleet was unconquerable and, since there was then no danger from the air, naval supremacy appeared to guarantee the safety of all her Dominions. At home, no doubt, many things still remained to be done. But there had been considerable, if gradual, improvement in social conditions. There was much talk of the “submerged tenth” and the slums of the great towns. But that there was no vehement discontent was shown by the return of a large majority on the Right in the election of 1895. In fact, looking at the broad lines of social and political organisation, it was still true to say that the richer class generally, including some of the landowners, were possessed of the chief power in the land. There had been no fundamental changes, though many modifications in more or less important details, since the Reform Bill of 1832. Many of the working class had become enfranchised. But they had no effective representation in Parliament, and the idea that any of them should enter the Cabinet was still remote.

Two incidents will illustrate what I am trying to say. About this time there was a great gathering of the descendants of the Duchess of Abercorn.<sup>1</sup> She was a Russell—the half-sister of the Lord John Russell of the Reform Bill. It was held in the garden of Montagu House, now one of the Public Offices, but then the London residence of the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch. The latter was one of the numerous daughters of the Duchess of Abercorn, who were all married to various dignitaries. So that this Duchess and her children and children’s children and their husbands and wives, to the number of scores, if not hundreds, were a “cross section” of the old landed aristocracy of the country.

Another “society function”, to use a repulsive phrase, was held in Devonshire House in 1897. This was a fancy-dress ball, to which large numbers came in more or less magnificent costumes. The host was the man who had for years been leader of the Liberal Party, or a section of it, and was at this time a Liberal Unionist member of the Unionist Cabinet.

<sup>1</sup> See illustration facing page 64.

His house was not a very remarkable building, but had a splendid position. Its courtyard looked on Piccadilly, opposite Green Park, and its garden on the other side of the house adjoined that of Lansdowne House, belonging to another great leader of the Left Centre Liberalism of the day. Both these houses, like so many others of the same kind, are now gone, and one can only hope that those whose dwellings now occupy their sites have the same sense of unselfish patriotism as that which animated their ancient owners.

In this connection ought to be mentioned the great political assemblies which my parents, in the same way as other wealthy Conservatives, gave at their house—No. 20, Arlington Street—and, when my father was in Office, at the Foreign Office. This was before the days of the Government Hospitality Fund, and those who gave such entertainments had to pay for them themselves. The Whips and other party managers attached great importance to these events. They were said to be most useful in “keeping the party together”. So all Members of Parliament and many others who had done “work for the party” were asked, as well as personal friends and dignitaries, to increase the attractiveness of the gathering. At the Foreign Office there was also a very large official element, including ambassadors and other distinguished foreigners, and, following the dictum of Dr. Johnson, light refreshments were provided. To me an evening party has always seemed a doubtful pleasure. I do not like struggling in a crowd, even if it consists of people in evening dress or uniform and is held in large rooms. One cannot sit down, and, even apart from deafness, it is very hard to hear anything that is said. Moreover, everyone is always looking about to see who else is there, so that any continuous conversation is impossible. However, the parties I am speaking of appeared to be very popular, to judge not only by the crowds who came but also by the great exertions made to obtain invitations to them. For instance, shortly before one of these parties, my mother, on her usual afternoon drive in an open barouche, became impatient with its too leisurely progress and urged the driver to get on. He obeyed, with the result that the pole of the heavy carriage crashed into the rear of a small brougham in front. An old lady, who was its only occupant, took the injury calmly. Her modest personal claim in the way of compensation was for a card of invitation to the forthcoming Foreign Office reception, not with the idea of presenting it, but so that it might be displayed on the mantelpiece!

So much for London. At Hatfield, too, there was a good deal of hospitality. It was less than twenty miles from London, with a good train service. Though I do not think there were any evening parties, there was, about once a year in the winter, a ball to which many Hertfordshire neighbours were invited, as well as a sprinkling from London, and usually

some royal personage. There were also garden parties given in honour of some distinguished foreigner, such as the Shah of Persia, Li Hung Chang and even the German Emperor. There had been a garden party in 1887 to which Queen Victoria came. As such things go, they were pleasant enough. They were given in the summer, and if the weather was fine the gardens were beautiful with some very fine copper beeches and mulberry trees. There were also from time to time political meetings, addressed by eminent speakers. I remember hearing Joseph Chamberlain speak to an Ulster meeting in the courtyard, with his almost painfully incisive delivery.

Besides these major gatherings, my mother was fond of week-end parties, to which came almost anyone she happened to see or to think of.

Meanwhile the political machine went on, but I had little to do with it. I have already said that I appeared for Rutherford Harris before the special South African Committee appointed to investigate the charges that Chamberlain and others had been mixed up with the Jameson Raid. The one incident in that case in which I was concerned arose from the fact that Labouchere, who was a member of the Committee, had thought it right to make violent attacks on my client outside the Committee. I protested, and the Committee told me I had no right to do so. But they passed a resolution amounting to a censure of Labouchere, which they had no right to do. All they were entitled to do was to report to the House, which would have prolonged the incident. In a Jubilee year that would have been undesirable, so, in a typically English way, the whole incident was left in a kind of parliamentary mist. Nothing definite was done. But Labouchere was somewhat discredited. He was a man of considerable ability and not much scruple. He had been a journalist on a paper called the *World*. He separated from it and started another paper, *Truth*, which the witticism of the day called "another but not a better world". Nevertheless it did some good in exposing minor administrative and judicial scandals.

I have spoken of 1897 as the climax of the Victorian Age. It was also a turning point in my family history. In this year my mother's health began to break down. Three years earlier my Aunt Pooey—Louisa Alderson—"la tante classique" of the French tutor, had died. She was a selfless woman, who lived entirely for others. Among those others were my mother and her children, to whom she was devoted, as they were to her. Her characteristic failing was nervousness, partly about her own health, and still more about the health and safety of her nephews and nieces. Her death, in 1894, was a heavy blow to my mother. She frequently spoke of it as a rehearsal of her own. It was also the first breach in our intimate family circle. In 1897 also, my wife, whose deafness had not diminished,

was advised to try a warmer climate for the winter. Accordingly, we went out to Beaulieu. I came home in January, and my mother, being then far from well, joined Nelly there. There also came several of Nelly's brothers on their way to the Riviera, which was a great pleasure to her, particularly as they liked my mother very much and she liked them. They all returned to England for the Jubilee. At the beginning of 1898, my mother underwent a severe operation, from which she appeared to recover very well. In the summer she and my father went to a place called Schlucht, in the Vosges, for mountain air. I went with them, but my wife went with her sister, the Duchess of Leeds, to Vienna to be under Politzer, who had a high reputation as an aurist. While they were there the Austrian Empress was assassinated at Geneva—for what possible reason I do not know, since she had not, and was not supposed to have, any influence over the Austrian Government. The event naturally made a tremendous impression in her country and stirred the Viennese to great demonstrations of loyalty.

Here are some extracts from my wife's letters about it:

Sept. 11. "What a horrible thing this murder of the Empress. They had an official leaflet all over the streets yesterday. The Hotel people could talk of nothing else."

Sept. 16. "We went out last night to see the procession of the hearse from the station—such crowds out, all quite silent and torches flaring and troops waiting, all for one dead woman. I think I never saw anything more ghostly—like a bad dream. I don't like death shows except in church or with music."

Sept. 17. "I have just got back from the ceremonies. . . . All the royal carriages were plastered with black cloth. The poor old Emperor looked quite broken down. The Emperor William was with him all the time. One couldn't see anything of the women as they wore veils down to their feet, just like nuns."

Meanwhile I had been at Schlucht with my parents—the last time before increasing illness made it obvious that that chapter in my life was coming to an end. I met my wife in Germany and, after a few days spent on a second visit to the Black Forest, returned to England. There it became clear that the Vienna treatment had failed to do any permanent good to my wife's deafness.

A year or two earlier we had taken a little house, called Bank Farm, at Forest Row, in Sussex, the main merit of which was that it was close to the Ashdown Golf Links, of which Horace Hutchinson became the great ornament. Here we saw a lot of the Richard Cavendishes, who took a house close by, called Ashdown Place. Lady Moyra Cavendish was a relation of my wife, and with her husband—Dick—they were a delight





GALE COTTAGE, 1900

and amusement to us until they left Sussex to go to the Holker property in Lancashire, to which he had succeeded. He had been a Member of Parliament for that division of Lancashire. But as a Free Trade Unionist he was turned out over Tariff Reform, and took no further part in politics, though he continued to do a certain amount of public work. We often stayed with them. She was very delightful, radiantly beautiful, having a child-like enjoyment of life, combined with perfect unselfishness and a genuine spiritual humility. She died during the early part of the Second World War, and Dick followed her a year or two later—a great loss to us and to their other innumerable friends.

In 1898 the owner of Bank Farm, who had become a widow, wanted to return to it. We were so fond of the place and the so-called forest—really a big tract of moorland country—that we searched for and found another site about three miles away. It was over the ridge of the forest, and looked towards the South Downs—a very beautiful view. It was freehold, a plot about three acres large, standing in the midst of the moor, and we bought it. Here we began to build a small house. A surveyor whom I used to meet in the committee rooms, hearing of the project, solemnly dissuaded me from going on with it, saying, "It is a fearfully exposed situation". So it was, and partly for that reason we called it "Gale". But it has been a complete success. The house is reasonably comfortable, though unfortunately, as I think, our architect—excellent in other ways—believed solid walls were much better than hollow walls and, in spite of the protests of our builder, the house was so built. No doubt it made for strength, and when, forty years afterwards, a German bomb fell just outside the front door, the damage done was inconsiderable. But though resistant to bombs, it was very pervious to rain, which for many years in high winds was driven through the south-west side of it. In spite of this, on the whole we have immensely enjoyed living there. In one respect we have been very lucky. We have had living round us a number of very pleasant and interesting neighbours.

Just before this came our first great sorrow. My mother's recovery after the operation proved temporary, and late in the year of 1899 she died. Her outstanding characteristic was her intense vitality. She loved fresh air and sea-bathing. She was interested in everything. She said herself that no one bored her. Whatever she did she did it with all her might. But her ruling passion was devotion to her husband and her children. For herself she had no vanity, but for them she was very sensitive. It may be that she over-estimated some of us, but she was saved from the appearance of it by a delightful sense of humour. She liked to think herself a great gourmet and, in fact, enjoyed any sort of domestic festivity. But I do not think she cared in the least what she ate or drank. Indeed, when we travel-

led with her as children we were always told that good travellers could eat anything! Her standards, both moral and religious, were very high, and she was a most sympathetic companion to her children. She read out to us continually—mainly Scott's novels as I have said—and we loved them, for she read very well and she was a wonderful adept at skipping the dull parts. She had a faculty for being right. Her opinions, particularly about persons, usually turned out to be correct. But how she arrived at them I do not know, for the reasons she gave were clearly insufficient, though brilliantly expressed. It was part of her character that she never betrayed a confidence, for her personal loyalty was without limits.

It is impossible to exaggerate what her loss meant to us and it must have been far greater to her husband. Indeed, I do not think he ever recovered from it.

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In the course of that year the dispute with the Boers under Kruger got worse, and at last Kruger sent an ultimatum, which we rejected. He thereupon invaded Cape Colony. At first the war went badly, owing mainly to the difficulties of keeping our troops properly supplied and reinforced from the other side of the ocean. In particular, a British force was besieged in Ladysmith, and the efforts to relieve it repeatedly failed. Just before the Boers had completely surrounded it, my brother-in-law—Hedworth Lambton—succeeded in moving some large naval guns from his ship—the *Powerful*—into the town. Meanwhile, Lord Roberts had been sent out, with Kitchener as his Chief of Staff, to take command of our forces, and thenceforward things went better, though the war dragged on till the spring of 1902. In 1900 what was called the Khaki Election took place. It was, perhaps, inevitable that it should be so, but in the electoral contest there was an atmosphere of mixed patriotism and Party politics which was very disagreeable. My eldest brother had gone to the war and, at his wife's request, I represented him before the electorate at Rochester. In fact, there was no contest, so I had little to do, and went as soon as I could to Gale.

Early in 1901, Queen Victoria died, and the great reign closed in rather unhappy circumstances. Compared to the World Wars the losses on both sides in South Africa were insignificant and there was little bitterness in the fighting. But there was also little glory, which perhaps accounts for the rather hysterical joy in London when the siege of the small town of Mafeking was raised in the summer of 1900. My younger brother—Edward—was shut up in it with Baden Powell and had a bad time with fever and the death of his mother. Perhaps the worst part of the war was the violent hostility of several of the European countries and the conviction of their soldiers, on quite insufficient grounds, that the British army was not of much fighting value—a misconception which perhaps

encouraged German aggression. Though the main war was over by the end of 1900, several months of guerilla fighting went on until May 1902, when peace was made.

My father had been anxious to retire from office ever since the Queen's death. He had a profound respect for her knowledge and experience and for her unfailing courage. She spoke of him as the greatest of her Prime Ministers, and he had complete confidence in and, if the word may be allowed, a deep affection for her. When she went, therefore, his last personal link with office was broken, and he only remained on till peace was made lest his retirement should complicate the political position. He retired in 1902, and died in the summer of 1903.

At the request of Henry Newbolt, the Editor of the *Monthly Review*, I wrote a short article in October about my father, from which I will quote the following words:

"He was thought to be cold-hearted and cynical. It is difficult for any one who knew him well to conceive a more complete misconception of his character. He was reserved, even shy, beyond most men. He would as soon have made a parade of his religion as of his feelings. But they were not the less real for that. This is not the place to speak of the depth of his domestic affection or even of his devotion to Queen Victoria. But no true estimate of his life will ever be made which leaves those two factors out of account. Still less can his profound religious faith be here discussed. It is enough to say that it was the mainspring of his life, the foundation on which all else was built . . ."

I have nothing further to add, save that I agree in every point with the portrait in my sister Gwendolen's "Life" of him.

In other respects there was little change in our way of living. We settled down at Gale. We even bought a small American steam car—a "Locomobile"—which gave me full occupation. Its extreme speed on the flat was twenty miles an hour, though it could climb hills rather well. Its defect was that it perpetually broke down, mainly because, though the main ideas of its construction were ingenious, the workmanship was deplorable. Once, going down a steep hill, I found the brake would not act properly. I stopped somehow, and then, with a cord, fastened a bit of boarding to trail behind the car on which my wife was seated as an improvised drag! In this way and in a cloud of dust—for dustless roads did not then exist—by going very slowly, we got down safely!

It is difficult now to realise the hostility of the man-in-the-street raised by the coming of the motor-car. I remember a passer-by saying to me that "You—i.e. car users—are the curse of the country"; and when I

took it on visits to my brothers-in-law at Newmarket and Wilton it had to be hidden from their sight.

Professionally I went on as before. I had a little work in the courts, but I did much better in the committee rooms, and it became more and more a question whether it would not be the best plan for me to concentrate on the work there. I asked advice from various people. That which chiefly influenced me was that I found that my father, when pressed, was for my doing the work that paid best, on the ground that it was probably that for which I was most fitted. I, however, made no decision, beyond taking chambers in Parliament Street as well as at Paper Buildings. Then came Arthur Balfour's succession to the Premiership in 1902, and the long controversy about religious education began, or perhaps I should say became acute.

The main controversy was between the Church of England and the Nonconformists. The question was whether the children in the elementary schools should be brought up as members of some definite religious body or whether they should be given non-sectarian religious teaching.<sup>1</sup>

I shall not attempt here any description of the details of this fight. It was renewed vehemently on Birrell's Education Bill in 1906, and it has lasted, with intermissions, down to the present time. And now the great majority of the children of the country are brought up in schools in which religion is very much pushed into the background. It is only to be taught in a limited time during school hours, and no teaching in favour of the corporate aspect of Christianity, by which I mean the necessity for Christians to belong to some definite body, is allowed.

However, Balfour managed to patch up some kind of temporary settlement, which was vigorously denounced by some of the nonconformists, who refused to pay rates, part of which might go to the support of a form of Christianity of which they disapproved. This was called "passive resistance", and no doubt contributed to the fall of the Conservative Government.

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All this became of secondary electoral importance by reason of the action of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. When he decided to join the Conservative Government in 1895 he was asked what office he would like, and he chose the Colonial Office.

In the administration of this Department he showed initiative and resource. He abandoned the "Little-England" doctrine in which he had been brought up and became an ardent advocate of a new Imperialism. There have been Imperialists in this country for a long time past, if by

<sup>1</sup> See further on the point at pages 104-5.

that is meant men who believe that the existence of the British Empire—or Commonwealth—has been of great advantage to this country and to all the other countries which comprise it, and that its territories and interests ought to be maintained, if necessary by force. But the old Imperialism went farther. It held that the Government of the Empire was a trust given to the British people, by which a duty was placed upon them to preserve its existence and its ideals. This, among other things, involved that, in respect to lands of which administration remained in Downing Street, the native inhabitants should have the first claim on us, and that we should not seek to make exclusive profits out of such colonies for the advantage of the Home Country. With regard to the self-governing Dominions, our relations had gradually developed into warm and loyal friendship between the different States in the Commonwealth, coupled with complete liberty and independence of each State. As for foreign countries, they would be expected to behave to the whole Commonwealth and those that lived therein in the same way as they did to those living in the United Kingdom, and, though they might have special relations with any part of the Commonwealth, they must remember that internationally the Empire was a single unit. In other words, under Disraeli and Salisbury the slogan of “Empire and Liberty” represented a genuine ideal of Government, and the conception that the Empire was a responsibility rather than a reward—“the white man’s burden”—was deeply held.

The New Imperialists, as I understood them, did not reject these ideas, but they modified them and added to them. They sought to strengthen the bonds of Empire by the creation of economic advantages to those countries within the Empire which would not be possessed by outsiders. That was the origin of the movement which afterwards came to be known as Tariff Reform. Its centre was Preference—that is to say, a provision by which certain duties would be paid in respect of imports coming from foreign countries into the Empire which would not be paid, at least at the same rate, in respect of goods going from one part of the Empire to another. When Chamberlain started his campaign in May 1903, that was his main theme. Since at that time there were, generally speaking, no import duties in the United Kingdom, they had to be created, especially on those goods, like corn and meat, which were largely supplied to us by our Dominions. Accordingly, it was laid down that if “you mean to have a system of Colonial Preferences, you must have a tax on corn”, and that became one of the chief issues of the political controversy. It was soon clear that, on the face of it, a tax on corn was unpopular. It recalled all the old fiscal battles of fifty years earlier, at the time when the manufacturers utilised their newly-won political power in order to repeal the tax on

corn, and so lower the cost of production by cheapening the cost of living. The landowners had never liked the repeal, and many of them were delighted to have the opportunity of a political revenge. But they would never have succeeded in getting it without the assistance of the New Imperialism.

It was to lessen the unpopularity of the Corn Duties that two additions were made to the Preference proposals. In the first place, it was said that the policy of free imports had inflicted hardship on our industries. How could we be expected to compete with foreign cheap labour without the protection which foreigners in their own markets all enjoyed? The argument is familiar, and need not be developed. It had a second branch which attracted many who were doubtful about Protection, or even Preference. Whatever might be thought of the advantage of import duties here, duties imposed by foreign Governments on the import into their countries of British goods were a grievous handicap to our trade. On that point all were agreed, and a large part of the energies of our Foreign Service was employed in negotiating the lowering or abolition of such foreign duties. So long, it was said, as we were precluded from imposing import duties, such negotiations were bound to fail. We had nothing to offer, no disadvantage to threaten. Hence many persons, like Lord Lansdowne, who doubted the wisdom of Preference or Protection, were favourable to Retaliation.

It was into this controversy, of which I have very imperfectly sketched the outline, that I was drawn. Looking back, I am inclined to think that the fiscal importance of the proposals was a good deal exaggerated. The argument on theory is elaborate and far-reaching, but the actual evidence of the harm or benefit of a protective policy is very conflicting. Without going into it in detail, it is clear that countries have prospered economically both under a free trade or free import system and under one based on moderate protection. As for Retaliation, its achievements are questionable, nor am I satisfied that Preferential arrangements have added to the strength of the British Empire. Indeed, it is on this point that the actual value of the change is most disputable.

No doubt any move in any part of the British Commonwealth to show friendliness to those living in other parts is a good thing, and in that sense and for that purpose Imperial Preference is desirable in the same way as the interchange of presents helps to keep members of a family united. But the moment it is treated as a matter of business the grant of a pecuniary advantage is as likely to lead to acrimonious dispute as the reverse. I have always understood that the Ottawa Agreements on this subject led to a good deal of angry feeling. Nor have I ever heard from any of the Dominions that one of the reasons they stood by us so magnificently in war-time

was that they did not wish to lose the Preference. Such an idea certainly never entered the head of anyone concerned. *Without disputing*, therefore, that Preference has had its value as a “gesture”, I do not think that it went very far. On the other hand, I believe that its international effect has been unfortunate. It has long been true that the extent of our Dominions has been a grievance worked by those ill-disposed to us in other countries. Treitschke and his school habitually referred to England as a “robber State”—a small, almost insignificant country—which, by a mixture of fraud and force, had extended its possessions all over the globe. It was this sentiment which was largely the inspiration of the German Colonial Party and, in the eyes of the Emperor William II, justified the creation of a German Fleet. Traces of the same feeling could be found in Russia and France, and even in the United States. But so long as we accepted the policy of Free Imports it was difficult for our foreign critics to show that our Empire did them any harm. On the contrary, they knew that the extension of British freedom, British justice and British order was materially of advantage to everyone. But when a complete change in our external policy was announced and we asserted our right, which in law was incontestable, to close or impede access to British ports, the threat to foreign countries became manifest. It was true that the actual policy of Preference was not of great financial importance, and it was difficult for Protectionist countries to complain because we had adopted Protection. All the same it became thenceforth clear that foreigners were only admitted to trade with our vast Empire by our leave, which could at any time be withdrawn. I cannot doubt that this change of policy has tended to exacerbate those who are jealous of British power and has deprived our foreign friends of one of their most useful arguments in its support.

I do not mean to say that, but for Tariff Reform, the immense change in our position as a Great Power would not have taken place. The intrinsic strength of Russia and of the United States was bound sooner or later to have made itself felt. So, too, Home Rule may have been inevitable, even if hastened by the fiscal disruption of the Unionist Party. Our departure from Egypt could not have been indefinitely postponed, and self-government for India could not have been permanently resisted, though it might perhaps have been possible to grant it in a more dignified and satisfactory manner. But I cannot help feeling that the adoption of the New Imperialism, honestly and sincerely advocated as promoting the strength and prosperity of the British Empire, in fact tended in the opposite direction.

Meanwhile the campaign started in May, 1903, proceeded with vigour in the following year. Chamberlain resigned and made a series of speeches in the chief cities of this island, in which he pressed his Imperial views with great vigour, often adding a local touch showing how Protection

would help the industries of each locality. Meanwhile the Duke of Devonshire, after some hesitation, also resigned office as a Free Trader on October 3rd, 1903, so that the old Whig Party lost its leader at almost the same moment as the Old Tory leader died. His resignation was accompanied or followed by those of several other Unionist leaders. The change was complete. The dominance of the landowner was at an end, and his place was taken by the business man. Bonar Law was fond of maintaining that intellectually the change was a great improvement. It may have been so. But the ideas were different. The old conception coming down from feudal days that a man had no unqualified right to his property but held it only as a trust, the condition of which was his readiness to discharge his public duties, was demodified. Instead, the new doctrine was that a man had a right to what he could get, so long as it was honestly come by and, with a similar qualification, could do what he pleased with it. Unpaid service was neither asked for nor much approved. The same principles were applied to Imperial matters. Our great Dominions belonged to the British Commonwealth, and we had a right to deal with them as they and we liked. If, in doing so, we injured foreign citizens, that could not be helped. Indeed, some New Imperialists rejoiced that it should be so, for they tended to regard all foreigners as potential—if not actual—enemies who should be kept as weak as possible. The conception that we were under a duty to use our possessions for the benefit of ourselves, no doubt, but also of the world at large, was regarded as being at the best a piece of washy sentimentality.

It soon became clear that it was in this spirit that the Tariff Reform fight was to be carried on. The first step was to make the Birmingham ideas part of the official policy of the Conservative or Unionist Party. That was not very easy, for it involved, among other things, a clear, definite statement of policy. Chamberlain could have furnished such a statement, if not in 1903, very soon after. But it was an essential part of his campaign to carry with him Balfour. Indeed, without that it was hopeless to expect any cordial approval of Tariff Reform by the Conservative Central Office. And Balfour at first could not be got to go beyond destructive criticism of Free Trade, or, as he preferred to call it, Insular Free Trade. But when a complete change of policy is advocated, mere criticism of the existing state of things does not go very far. Further, the Tariff Reformers were far from being homogeneous. Only what were called “whole hoggers” were prepared to adopt Protection and Preference as well as Retaliation. Even the Preferentialists were nervous about the food taxes, and most people shied at general Protection. In addition to difficulties as to policy, the ordinary Conservative Party men were in considerable doubt about following the lead of an old nonconformist Radical like

Joseph Chamberlain. They recalled the bitterness with which he had attacked some of their leaders and his rather ill-considered reference to them as men "that toiled not, neither did they spin". He favoured Dis-establishment of the Welsh Church, and his education views were far from satisfactory to them. I remember a good deal later than this being shown an extremely hostile cartoon of Chamberlain, drawn by an official Conservative, who afterwards accepted Tariff Reform.

The result was considerable haziness as to what was the official Unionist attitude on the fiscal question. In answer to repeated demands, Balfour refused to be precise. The various formulae which he approved were all capable of being interpreted in more than one way. On the other hand, he sought to insist on acceptance by all the Party of his leadership. Had he done just the opposite and, while stating very clearly how far he would go in the direction of Tariff Reform, had added that he did not consider that it should be treated as a test of Party loyalty, I am convinced that the disastrous defeat of the Right at the Election of 1905 would not have occurred and that probably some measure of Fiscal Reform would have been generally agreed upon. It has happened on more than one occasion that far-reaching reforms put forward by a political leader towards the end of his life suffer from his very natural anxiety to get something done without delay. Perhaps that is what occurred in the case of Tariff Reform.

Meanwhile some of those Unionists who remained Free Traders were carrying on a very vehement campaign against the Birmingham policy. Among them my brother Hugh was very prominent, working in close combination with Winston Churchill. There were many debates in the House of Commons on the subject, in which the Unionist Free Traders had great argumentative advantages. Nor did they stop there. Among other moves, my brother and Winston decided to hold a meeting at Birmingham against the Chamberlain proposals. They found it impossible to get an influential platform locally, so they got a number of their friends, of whom I was one, to travel down with them for that purpose. The meeting was quite peaceful—but of course it envenomed the party fight.

This was only one incident. A Unionist Free Trade Club had been formed, with the Duke of Devonshire as its head. An effort was made, unavailingly, to secure a Unionist Free Trader newspaper. I took an active part in this, the essential thing being to raise a large sum of money for the purpose. We had no difficulty in getting the support of distinguished persons like the Duke of Devonshire. But when we went into the city we found very little response. I have no doubt it would have failed commercially and it was a "blessing in disguise" that it never started.

By far the most unwise part of the Tariff Reform campaign was the



#### A CHOICE OF PLANKS

[The chief plank in the Unionist programme is Tariff Reform. See Daily Press, *passim.*]

The Confederate King to Lord Robert Cecil: "Take the oath or over you go!"

1911 PUNCH CARTOON

*By permission of the Proprietors of Punch.*

organised attack on all the seats held by Unionist Free Traders. Chamberlainite candidates were brought out against them, avowedly for the purpose of excluding them from Parliament, even if that could only be done by letting in a Liberal. It seemed to us in those days a monstrous thing that Conservatives, some of whom were already distinguished in Parliament, should be opposed by members of their own Party because they would not adopt a new policy which was only doubtfully approved by their titular leader. Men like my brother were strong Conservatives. They accepted to the full the traditional Party policy. But, because they would not adopt the views of one who still held Radical views on some subjects, they were to be driven from Parliament. Nowadays, such tactics would have been called totalitarian.

I remember making a speech at a dinner of (I think) the Marylebone Conservative Association, of which I was President, in which I explained that I was not so much against the Tariff Reform policy in itself. But I was convinced that the agitation for it would end in a serious disaster for the Party, whereby many other causes in Church and State would be jeopardised. That turned out to be only too true.

I had taken Silk in 1900, and that had not lessened my legal practice. Especially in the committee rooms it had steadily increased. I had some other work besides, including appearance before the Court of Claims to establish rights to do certain services at the Coronation. One or two peerage cases also came my way. One which I argued in 1904 especially interested me. It was a claim by Lord Mowbray to the Earldom of Norfolk, given to his ancestor by Edward I. The case for the claim was that the earldom so granted was one which descended to the heirs general of the grantee—that is, through the female line as well as through the male—and Lord Mowbray was the eldest heir general, though not the eldest heir male, of the Earl of Norfolk of Edward I's day. I appeared for the Duke of Norfolk, who also had an Earldom of Norfolk granted by Charles II, which was an earldom of the usual type, descending to the present Duke as heir male. So that there were two earldoms, one descendible as alleged to heirs general, which was what Lord Mowbray claimed, and one descendible to heirs male, which, without doubt, belonged to the present Duke. With some difficulty I got leave to appear on behalf of the Duke, though his earldom was not directly affected. We argued in the first place that an earldom, being essentially an office and not a title, could not be held by a woman, and therefore could not descend through female heirs. The point was not decided, but we did not much hope to win on it. In the course of the case a second point arose. The earldom claimed by Lord Mowbray had originally been held under a charter granted by earlier kings to one Bigod. He quarrelled with Edward I, who directed him to

surrender his earldom. He accordingly surrendered it to the King, who re-granted it to Lord Mowbray's ancestor, stating precisely that it was that earldom which Bigod had surrendered to the King. Some centuries later it was definitely decided that the holder of a peerage cannot surrender it, and that is now established, not only as the present law but as what has always been the law. It is true that antiquarian scholars hold that, whatever may be true of a peerage nowadays, in old times such an honour could be, and sometimes had been, surrendered. From a legal point of view that is irrelevant. Irregular proceedings at a time when the law was not understood cannot change it. It followed, therefore, that Bigod's peerage was unaffected by his surrender, that it did not pass to the King, and therefore could not be granted by the King to anyone else. No doubt the King could have created the Mowbray ancestor a new Earl of Norfolk. But that was not done. He was expressly given the earldom which had been held by Bigod.

The argument was accepted by the Committee of Privileges, and the Mowbray claim to the earldom was disallowed. I was much pleased. The revival of these dormant peerages is not a convenient practice. To allow a claimant who has no substantial connection with a holder of a title centuries ago to be clothed with all the rights and privileges (such as they are) of a peerage because of ingenious genealogical discoveries is a mere burlesque of the hereditary principle. In this case it was the more objectionable because the same title already belonged to a man whose claim to it was well known and universally acknowledged.

In 1905 I was asked by the solicitors for the company owning the docks at Singapore to appear in an arbitration to be held out there to settle the price to be paid by the Colony for the acquisition of the docks. There were to be two arbitrators, one appointed by the Company and one by the Colony, and an umpire, who was to be Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. Balfour Browne was for the Colony and, on behalf of the Company, I was offered a large fee, which was to be either £4,000 and my expenses or £5,000 all in. I chose the latter, as it enabled my wife to come with me, and to bring as her companion our friend—Miss Violet Dickinson.

Accordingly, in the middle of August we set sail in the S.S. *Victorian* from Liverpool for Quebec and Montreal. We had a prosperous but rather uncomfortable voyage. The only incident was that when we got near Newfoundland we came across a lot of icebergs. Our captain, who was a regular old sea dog, went straight on. At intervals the siren sounded as patches of fog came down. That was rather disturbing, as the icebergs were often quite close, so that I photographed them, anxiously remembering they were seven or eight times as big under the sea as they appeared above water. However, we got safely into the St. Lawrence and ultimately to

Montreal, where we landed and were most hospitably entertained by Sir Thomas Shaughnessy. Next day we went on by the Canadian Pacific. In the course of the journey our train was joined by Albert Grey, the Governor-General, and his wife, and also Laurier, then Prime Minister of the Dominion. They were going down to inaugurate (if that is the right expression) the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. Laurier was very agreeable. He gave us a humorous account of the difficulty of getting the French and British Canadians to appreciate each other. They differed on so many subjects—religion, literature, and even food. The British sneered at the French relish for pea soup, and the French retorted with I forgot what. I think it was Grey who dwelt on the very superior culture of the French, though most of the industrial progress was due to the British.

At Moose Jaw we stopped an hour or two and walked through what was then a very incomplete little prairie town. We went in to a Law Court held in a room in an ordinary house, and I was thrilled to hear a legal argument proceeding, based on English law-books and decisions. We also saw some of the Canadian Mounted Police, and heard how effectively they had snuffed out an attempt to “paint the town red” by some visitors from the States! So we dutifully admired British law and order and seriously reflected how it was one of the not least important “bonds of Empire”. At another station we got out to see the sunset and, in admiring it, we nearly missed the train and with the Governor-General had to be thrown into it as it was moving!

Albert Grey and his party left the train soon after this, and we went on to Banff, the well-known health resort in the Rockies. After a couple of nights there we travelled to Vancouver, by a splendid mountain railway. There we duly went to see the sights, including the great trees in Stanley Park, and then embarked for Japan on the *Empress of China*. We found Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and his wife and two tall daughters on board. He was always very kind to me, partly, as I heard him explain at a meeting, because his ancestor, Sir Michael Hicks, had been secretary to my ancestors Lord Burleigh and Robert Cecil in the days of Elizabeth. We certainly have the knack of preserving traditions in our country!

The voyage across the Pacific was completely uneventful. From the time we left Victoria to our first sight of Japan we saw nothing at all except the sea and, far away to the north, what looked like a few rocks. They were the Aleutian Islands, which though they were mentioned in the Second World War, have no value or importance—at least, so we were told.

After some thirteen days we reached Yokohama, and realised that the Russo-Japanese War was just over, so that we could only go into port

under naval directions. However, no difficulties were made and we landed. We stayed at Yokohama for a night or two and then went on by train to Tokyo, a very short distance. On our train was Ito, the Japanese statesman, who had just come back from the negotiation in America of the Treaty with Russia which had put an end to the war. Very wisely, the Japanese had been contented with what were, on the whole, moderate terms. But the Japanese militarists were far from content. I remember as we got out at Tokyo being warned by an English friend not to go too near Ito, as very likely he would be assassinated. However, that did not take place until some years later.

We stayed for some days in Tokyo in the same hotel as Sir Michael and his family, and there I found my old acquaintance—Rutherford Harris. He was there negotiating for some concession, and rather complained of the little help he got from the British Embassy compared to that which was given by the American Ambassador to his nationals. However, there was another side to it. I was told that the Japanese Ministers said that they liked the American diplomats very much, but, however conversation with them began, it always ended in the eulogy of a new kind of pump.

We were fortunate in finding as our Minister there Sir Claude Macdonald. He and his wife regarded themselves as owing much gratitude to my father, and were therefore anxious to do everything they could for his son. In passing may I say that I often read of the ingratitude of mankind but, speaking for myself, I have seen little of it. In any case, the Macdonalds did all they could to make our time in Tokyo pass pleasantly. Among other things, they organised a little purely Japanese dinner for us. We were rather overwhelmingly tall. Macdonald was tall, so were Hicks-Beach and his two daughters, and so was I, and so also was Miss Dickinson. To the Japanese we must have seemed enormous! By a concession to Western ideas, women took part in the dinner. But we were all required to sit on our heels—in which I wholly failed—and to eat with chopsticks, which was equally impossible to me. However, it was interesting, and I found the Japanese ladies pleasant, very superior, as they seemed to me, to their male belongings. After dinner there was a kind of entertainment, partly by young women, who came and sat opposite to us and made conversation, and partly by a theatrical performance at the end of the room—both of which were, of course, quite unintelligible. Macdonald also arranged for me to see the Mikado—a visit remarkable only for its total want of interest—an interchange of a few formal civilities. On another occasion we went to a kind of garden-party, where the leading personage was a Princess, reputed a great beauty!

Macdonald talked to me about the Japanese, who at that time were striving to obtain a reputation for Western political culture. From him

and others I heard two things about the war. In the first place there seemed very little individual responsibility. Everything was done by committees. If one asked about the merit of any Commander, one got no reply. He was only just one of many who were responsible for what was done. Sir Claude declared that after one of their victories over the Russians, Western critics were astonished that the success was so slowly and ineffectively followed up, the reason being that nothing could be done without the assent of the appropriate committee. The other characteristic was the extreme secrecy of the whole population. At the beginning of the war they lost one of their battleships. Though the fact was well known, if any one in Tokyo was asked about it, the reply would be complete denial of any knowledge, accompanied perhaps by a statement that the person asked did not take any interest in naval matters.

One day, leaving my companions in Tokyo, I went for a short visit to Nikko, celebrated for monuments to two of the Japanese heroes. The place is well known, and I need not describe it, beyond saying that the Pagoda standing in a rather solemn wood had a kind of austerity impressive to a casual visitor. I here tried to find out from my local guide what was the popular religion. I could get no answer. There did not appear to be any Deity. Nor was it exactly ancestor-worship, though it seemed to come nearer to that than anything I could understand. There had been in the past a great deal of Buddhism, but that was old-fashioned. On another day I went from Tokyo to see Kámakura, a place renowned for its view of the volcano Fuji-Yama, and also for a colossal statue of Buddha, which seemed to fill up completely a small valley. It was striking, and had more of a religious atmosphere than anything else I saw. But apparently it excited no popular interest.

From Tokyo I went on to Kyoto, the old capital, leaving my two companions in the care of Lady Macdonald. On my journey down I travelled with a British merchant, who had been there many years. He liked the Japanese and denied that they were untrustworthy in business. But they took a different view of commercial morality. They did not attach the same weight as Westerners did to the words of a contract or accept the view that whatever might happen its terms must be fulfilled. Their view was that the contracting parties ought to treat one another fairly, so that if a contract turned out to be unexpectedly profitable to one of them, he ought to make an allowance for that to the other contractor, and not insist on rigid compliance with every clause of the agreement. If he did not do that, then he was behaving unconscionably, and had no right to the fulfilment of the contract. Evidently such an attitude must be at the least very inconvenient to Westerners. He also told me that, on principle, anything

like an assumption of superiority by Europeans was deeply resented and rejected.

On the whole, though we certainly had nothing to complain of, we did not like the Japanese men much. The most attractive element was the children. They seemed very happy and cheerful, and mocked without restraint, but with no apparent malice, the strange-looking, clumsy, over-grown foreigners. As for the general atmosphere, one thing which I was told seemed characteristic. In the war which had just come to an end it was difficult to excite much sympathy for the wounded. If a man was killed in battle, then he had done all he could and was entitled to the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen. If he had been disabled, he was merely an uninteresting failure. As is well known, the Japanese Army was originally trained by the Germans and, though these instructors had been dismissed, there remained considerable admiration for German military ideas. That may be in part the explanation of subsequent Japanese action.

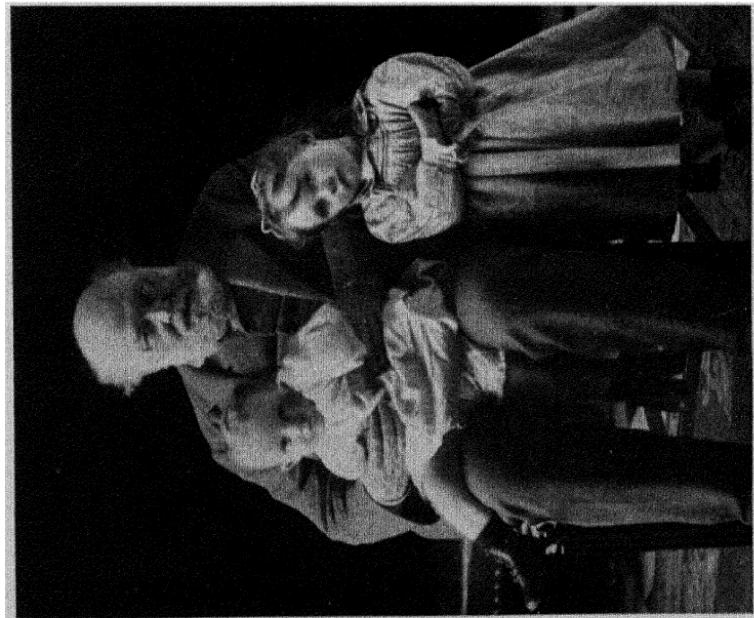
From Kyoto I went, via Kobe, to China. On the way there I had the company of one of our Consuls, and he told me an incident which he said was characteristic of the relations between the Chinese and Japanese. There had been a banquet attended by both nationalities and the Chinese, who was chairman, made a speech, which was replied to by a Japanese in highly eulogistic terms. He was on one side of the chairman and my consular friend on the other. As he sat down, the Japanese leaned behind the back of the Chinese and said in English to the Consul: "All nonsense! He's no good!"

Shanghai was rather depressing. It is almost level with the sea, and was then governed by a complicated international system, not very tolerant of the natives. However, that is all changed, so I need not dwell on it. From there I went on in the S.S. *Nubia* to Hong Kong, where the Governor—Sir Matthew Nathan—was good enough to entertain me. It was very pleasant, a beautiful place and a monument to British energy. From a bare hill, enclosing a magnificent harbour, it had been transformed into one of the leading ports of the world. I was only there for a couple of nights before going on to Singapore. The passage, though rather hot, was quite calm, marred only by an unhappy tragedy. A Lascar stoker rushed up from the stokehold one night and threw himself into the sea. The ship was stopped and search was made for the suicide. But he could not be found, and after waiting for some hours we went on. I could not hear of any reason for his action. But I was told it was not without precedent.

At Singapore I stayed with Hugh Fort, an old legal friend of mine, at his villa called Glencairn. He had been in Danckwerts's chambers with me, and was now one of my juniors in the arbitration. The climate is hot but not very hot, and there is no change. It remains somewhere round 100



GEORGINA, LADY SALISBURY, 1888



LORD SALISBURY WITH GRANDCHILDREN  
ROBERT CECIL (THE PRESENT LORD SALISBURY) AND  
BEATRICE CECIL (LADY HARLECH), 1896



degrees night and day throughout the year. Further, for some reason of which I heard no explanation, there is a thunderstorm almost every day. These conditions are rather trying for such a job as we were engaged in. Profuse perspiration was the normal condition, which involved great thirst, appeased by frequent whiskies-and-soda, called locally "stingahs", since plain water was thought unwholesome and soda water by itself was believed to be lowering. I do not think the whisky had any intoxicating effect, but I suspect it was bad for the liver. We were there only a little more than a fortnight but several of us were unwell, including the umpire. I got off with a swollen tonsil, which was a common complaint with me till it was removed twenty years later. Perhaps if we had recognised the difference in the conditions of life from those in England it might have been better. But, as a fact, we did not. We sat from ten o'clock till four, taking half an hour off for a very good lunch, with the result that there were occasional forensic "incidents", which are not worth recalling. Nor, indeed, are the details of the hearing, which was, in the main, quite normal. The only important question was whether the price to be paid should depend on the physical condition of the works, in which case it would be fairly low, or whether it should be chiefly governed by the amount of profits made, in which case it would be a good deal higher. After the fortnight's hearing, in which all the evidence was completed, it was decided that the final meeting should be held in London. The award which followed was satisfactory to the Dock Company.

My wife and Miss Dickinson followed us from Japan, arriving just before the adjournment to London was settled. They had had a much rougher passage than mine being caught by the tail end of a typhoon—not bad enough to be dangerous, but very disagreeable. They were lodged in the house of the German Consul, a rather ghastly place, furnished very unsuitably with heavy chairs and gilded decorations. There seemed to be no water in the house, but many bottles of liqueurs, two grand pianos and some portraits of the Kaiser.

On the whole we were glad to leave Singapore. Everyone was very kind. Our case had gone well. My host—Fort—had been most hospitable. The harbour was beautiful and the climate was tolerable. It was not malarious. Its main defect was that it was debilitating. As we sailed away, the great German club-house was pointed out—far larger than any other building of the kind. We travelled with our umpire and his family in a German ship called the *Zieten*. The captain was very courteous and pleasant. But some of the officers made no effort to conceal their contempt and dislike for Britons. We stopped at Penang for a few hours and at Colombo for a day and a night, and then steamed up the Red Sea, where there was a very unusual thunderstorm. And so to Egypt, where the

Cromers were kind enough to entertain us for a few days at the British Agency. Lady Cromer was a very old friend, and Cromer we knew a little personally and very well by reputation. He had a great admiration for my father, and may be said to have belonged to his school in foreign affairs. After a day or two there George Curzon arrived on his way back from India at the end of his Viceroyalty, and we withdrew to Helouan. It is in the desert, and we had a splendid view of the sunsets, with their marvellously brilliant colours. We also went to see the Sphinx and some of the other ancient monuments. Without quite committing myself to Cromer's ironic dictum: "There's nothing such a bore as Egyptian antiquities," I must confess that I found them more interesting than beautiful. But the chief attraction to me was my brother Edward, at this time an official of the Egyptian Government. He was the only one of her children that had a full measure of my mother's vitality. He was a brilliant talker, with a vivid sense of humour and great powers of observation, as will be seen in his sketches of Egyptian official life.<sup>1</sup>

After a day or two we went on in the same steamship as Curzon. He had had a great controversy with Kitchener over the proper organisation of the Indian Army, and was very bitter against the Government at home, especially Brodrick, the Secretary for War, and Balfour, the Prime Minister. He talked to me on board, but would express no definite opinion on the Fiscal Question, being entirely absorbed in his Indian grievance. When we got to Marseilles, my wife and I separated. She went to stay with her sister, the Duchess of Leeds, at Bordighera, and I travelled on to London.

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Though I did not know it then, this was practically the end of my life as a professional lawyer. It had been a pleasant time, both domestically and professionally. There had been losses and disappointments. But, on the whole, we had been prosperous and contented. I liked the Bar. The work was varied and interesting, from Quarter Sessions to the House of Lords. It is true that I was never a great forensic orator or a learned lawyer. I tried most forms of Common Law, petty crime, commercial, libel, etc.; an occasional effort in Chancery, never very successful, except perhaps in some patent actions; several "extras", like election petitions, peerage cases, coronation claims and arbitration; and above all, a steadily increasing parliamentary practice. Work at the Bar has two characteristics. The Tribunal, the Counsel and generally the witnesses are usually

<sup>1</sup> See *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official*, Hodder and Stoughton.

intelligent workers in the cause of British justice, and there is no system of justice in the world equal to it. It has a great history from the days of Magna Carta to the present time. I do not, of course, mean that it has had no defects. There have been blots in it, there have been incompetent and even corrupt judges, there have been times when the courts have been instruments of tyranny. But, through all our history the central principle has been upheld that the law is supreme. No official—military or civil, secular or ecclesiastical—can, or in principle ever could, disregard the Law. Even the King, who was in constitutional theory above the law, in practice, and in later centuries by constitutional doctrine, acted through Ministers who were themselves subject to it. This has been the chief guarantee of our liberty, of that personal freedom and responsibility which is bound up with our whole history and manner of life. Nor do I think that, on the whole, the legal profession has been unworthy of the law. Cheap sneers at lawyers are common. But in my opinion they are most unjust. Certainly, compared with that of politicians, the standard of conduct of lawyers will not suffer. They seem to me professionally more truthful, more disinterested, more generous than the general run of Ministers or Members of Parliament, let alone those specially engaged in political organisation and propaganda. There is, however, one characteristic result of training at the Bar which is the source of many of the criticisms of lawyers in Parliament. A lawyer, as I have elsewhere insisted, does not and should not express his own opinion. He is the mouthpiece of his client, and puts forward arguments, not because he thinks they are right, but because he thinks they are worth consideration. But if he gets up in the House of Commons to support or attack some policy, he has got to state as forcibly as he can what is his own convinced opinion, for he is not merely an advocate, he is one of the Judges. If he forgets this and deals with the point at issue as he would have done in court, he will inevitably convey the impression that he is either dishonest or a fool. An atmosphere of insincerity is immediately created, and this is kindly, but mistakenly attributed not so much to the man as to his profession.

I said just now that there was a second attractive characteristic of the law. It deals with particular issues or controversies, not as parts of some continuous business but as difficulties which have arisen in special circumstances. A criminal prosecution or proceedings at law, or in a Private Bill Committee once they are disposed of, are usually finished and done with. Those engaged in them need not concern themselves with them any more, except perhaps as part of their personal history. Here legal work differs profoundly from politics. In the latter every step by a Minister or a Member is important, not only in its immediate

#### ALL THE WAY

results, but in its far-reaching consequences. So that the ordinary politician is apt to worry himself with doubts as to whether he has taken the right course. No doubt he ought to do right though the heavens fall. But the difficulty often is to know what is right. It does not necessarily depend on the consequences of his actions.

## CHAPTER IV

### PARLIAMENT

I ARRIVED in London in the first week of December, 1905, and found the Balfour Government resigning. It had been an unfortunate experience for its chief. The whole political atmosphere had changed since the House of Commons was elected in the Khaki Election of 1900. The then Prime Minister—my father—had retired and Queen Victoria was dead. The two leaders of the Liberal Unionists—Chamberlain and Devonshire—had both resigned, and with them several of the original Cabinet Ministers. In the three years of the Premiership, Balfour had been called upon to deal with at least two major questions—licensing and education. His licensing solution has, on the whole, stood the test of time. But education was perhaps an insoluble problem. Anyhow, he only succeeded in finding an unpopular stopgap solution. Above all, there was the fiscal storm, which was violently disintegrating the Conservative Party. Nevertheless, in the House of Commons the Liberals were almost as much divided as the Conservatives. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was the official leader. But several of his chief lieutenants, like Asquith, Grey and Haldane, disapproved of his attitude during the Boer War, while Rosebery, the last Liberal Prime Minister, kept making ambiguous but critical speeches. Campbell-Bannerman himself, though he had many admirable qualities and proved himself a successful Prime Minister, was no match for Balfour in debate. He was repeatedly put in a humiliating position as the unsuccessful chief of a minority party which had been almost continuously out of power for the preceding twenty years. When, therefore, Balfour resigned on December 4th, the Conservatives, or many of them, confidently believed either that the Liberals would not be able to make a Government at all or, if they did, that it would be defeated at the polls. No doubt it was this hubristic frame of mind which encouraged the Chamberlainite extremists in their reckless campaign against some of the most respected traditional Tories. In fact, Campbell-Bannerman formed an extremely strong Government which lasted unbroken till the middle of the First World War.

It was in this situation that I was invited to stand for East Marylebone. The sitting Member—Boulnois—was a moderate Tariff Reformer and very popular in what was mainly a middle-class constituency. He retired for reasons of health. I was a moderate Free Trader and stood as such. I

emphasised my adherence to the old Conservative doctrines at home and in foreign policy, confining my support of Tariff Reform to acceptance in principle of Retaliation. I was elected by a fair majority, and took my seat as one of the one hundred and fifty-seven Conservative members who had survived the election. My brother was beaten in Greenwich and Balfour in Manchester. Chamberlain retained the Birmingham seats by large majorities, but in general the electoral defeat had been overwhelming. Nor was the attempt to attribute the result to unfair electioneering over the employment of Chinese labour in South Africa very convincing. The main cause of the defeat was the unfortunate leadership on Tariff Reform, which combined the defects of ambiguity and intolerance. These produced and accentuated the split in the Party, which on this, as on other occasions, led to electoral disaster.

When I first entered the House the situation did not, on the surface, appear encouraging. The Ministerialists consisted of three sections. There were over three hundred Liberals, eighty-three Irish Home Rulers—Parnellite and Anti-Parnellite—and some fifty Labour Members, who had for the most part been elected by Liberal as well as Labour votes. The supporters of the Government occupied the whole of the benches on the right hand of the Speaker. On the left, above the gangway which divides the seats on each side of the House, sat the Opposition, including myself. I sat on one of the benches farthest away from the Front Bench. Below the gangway, sat the Irish, and almost next to me John Redmond, with Healy and Dillon below him, together with other items of the Ministerialists. Roughly, therefore, the Opposition occupied one quarter of the House, which was about what it was numerically entitled to do.

We had no leader at first. Chamberlain, in the absence of Balfour, was far the most eminent member of the Opposition. But he was regarded by many of them as the cause of their defeat, and was therefore unacceptable. I remember him speaking to me very kindly and asking me something about my views, and I could only repeat, rather ungraciously, that I regarded Balfour as my leader. Very soon Balfour found a seat in the City of London, and thenceforward the Opposition was regularly constituted. The Ministerialists, not unnaturally, were arrogantly vociferous and anxious to emphasise their triumphant position. They got their chance very soon on a motion by the Government approving their fiscal policy. The debate had some remarkable incidents. Balfour, instead of meeting the resolution by a direct negative, put forward various subtle dialectical points designed to show how argumentatively futile was the Government action. He was heard with considerable impatience, till at last Campbell-Bannerman seized the opportunity to pay off old scores by saying, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of his followers, "Enough of this foolery!" and

refusing to answer Balfour's questions. Later Wyndham supported Balfour's speech and moved a dilatory amendment, whereupon Campbell-Bannerman, without answering him, moved the closure. On the closure I voted with the Opposition, but on the substantive motion I voted with the Government!

Before this happened there had been several interesting speeches. Two stand out in my memory. One was a violent speech by Herbert Paul. He had already spoken on the Address, attacking Chamberlain and quoting the lines about George IV's Queen:

"Most gracious 'Joe' we thee implore  
To go away and sin no more.  
But if that effort be too great  
To go away at any rate."

Though he was cheered, the speech did more good to the Opposition than to the Government. The other speech was by F. E. Smith. It was, no doubt, carefully prepared, but it had all the appearance of a spontaneous debating onslaught on the Government. It was rapturously received by the Opposition and, indeed, much admired by the whole House. Several people said that it was the best maiden speech that had ever been made. He certainly had an extraordinary power of speaking with or without preparation. At a moment's notice he could get up and make a speech on any subject, admirably expressed and full of sparkling phrases. I got to know him very well and like him very much. Though he was a strong Tariff Reformer, he never acted hostilely to me or, as far as I know, to any Unionist Free Trader. He was a good lawyer, and from many points of view made an excellent Chancellor. But his charm lay in his wonderful vitality, bubbling over with humour. When I had been driven away from Marylebone by the Tariff Reformers, I went with my friend George Bowles to stand for Blackburn as a Free Trade Unionist. I asked several distinguished colleagues to come and speak for me, but none came except F. E. He arrived in great spirits from a strenuous fight in his own constituency. He told me that before one of his meetings he heard that there were to be a large number of questions, as often happens in Lancashire. He therefore prepared half a dozen questions of his own, the answers to which would help and not hurt him. When the time of questions came and hundreds were handed in, he said: "It is quite impossible for me to answer the whole of these questions. I will therefore take six at hazard and answer them." Then followed his prepared questions with immense success. I remember only one of them. His opponent's expenses were being paid for him. So one of the questions was: "Are you paying your own expenses?" To which he replied: "Of course I am." Then, pretending to hear some criticism from one of his friends,

he added: "But I make no point of that!" How far this story was literally true I don't know. He told it to me with the most delicious aplomb, no doubt to cheer me up.

His untimely death was a tragedy, though by then his health had been irretrievably ruined. I do not know that he had strong political convictions. But for all that he was a perfectly honest and honourable man of exceptional talents and accomplishments, and had things gone differently, might easily have been Prime Minister.

As the work of the Session developed I very soon found plenty to do. I made my maiden speech, not on any great occasion, which was wise of me, but on a relatively small question on the Address where I saw an opportunity for a debating point. The intervention was fairly successful, and I began to make many speeches of the same kind. The Opposition was not only small in numbers, but so discouraged that not many of them wanted to speak. I was therefore able to speak on almost any occasion. The Speaker was my cousin—James Lowther—and, though I don't think he favoured me improperly, yet he was always kind to me and did not object to my frequent speeches as perhaps some Speakers might have done. There were three or four others who sat in the same part of the House as I did who were ready for a little guerilla warfare, and we often worked together.

The one who became most intimate with me was George Bowles, the son of a well-known old Parliamentarian, universally called Tommy Bowles. George showed considerable parliamentary ability and great courage. There were also my brother-in-law—Freddy Lambton—a charming man and a witty speaker, and another Freddy—Freddy Smith—the son of W. H. Smith, who had been a colleague of my father. These were all Unionist Free Traders, but several of the younger Tariff Reformers also collaborated, one being Lord Winterton, who is, I believe, now the Father of the House.

The chief business of the Session was Birrell's Education Bill. I am not going to attempt a detailed account of its proposals. But a brief sketch of the main issues involved is essential. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the State had done little for public education. As a result of the great religious revival, of which John Wesley was the leader, followed by the Evangelical Movement in the Church of England, a system of voluntary schools, promoted by the Christian Churches, grew up. The larger number of such schools were established by the Church of England, but the Roman Catholic Church and the Nonconformist Protestant Churches also did their part. The State made grants in aid of education, and in 1870 an Act was passed creating a system of national education to supplement and complete the voluntary system then existing. Immediately the question

arose what religion—if any—was to be taught in the Board Schools, as the State schools were called. There were various proposals, and eventually a compromise was reached, embodied in a clause proposed by Cowper Temple, by which the Bible was to be taught, but in such a way as not to teach doctrines distinctive of any particular Church. There was also a conscience clause empowering parents to withdraw their children from the school when any religious teaching was to be given. The effect was to make Christianity a special subject, instead of being the foundation of all education, and to teach it divorced from the organised Churches, without which Christianity cannot be fully explained. The teaching in the voluntary schools alone mitigated a state of things which all Roman Catholics and many Anglicans deplored. As time went on and the standard of education and school buildings gradually rose, the difficulty of maintaining the voluntary schools by private subscription increased, and became more acute when general education was made compulsory and free. It was to deal with this difficulty that the Balfour Education Act provided rate aid to the voluntary schools on certain conditions—a measure deeply resented by the nonconformists, who regarded it as a great infringement of their religious liberty if any portion of their rates was used for educating their fellow-subjects in the form of Christianity in which their parents believed though some of the rate-payers did not. The main point of Birrell's Bill was to confine as far as possible Government assistance to schools where the Christianity taught was confined to Cowper Temple religion. I had no hesitation in opposing these proposals, not only because they seemed to me bigoted, but mainly because I feared that they would injure the effective teaching of any Christianity. Whether for that reason or some other, there can be no doubt that in the twentieth century both Christian faith and Christian knowledge have calamitously declined.

Accordingly, the Opposition struggled hard but unavailingly in the House of Commons to give to all parents the right to have their children taught in the public elementary schools the form of Christianity which they approved, by teachers who believed in what they taught. I took my full share in the parliamentary battle, declaring on the Second Reading that as a Churchman I regarded religion not as an adjunct but as the foundation of all education. We had the support of the Irish Nationalists, and in the same debate Tim Healy made against the Bill the most eloquent speech that I ever heard in Parliament. However, the Second Reading was carried by a very large majority, and we proceeded to discuss the clauses of the Bill in Committee. In these I often collaborated with Charles Masterman, a Liberal High Churchman, and became very intimate with him. He had an attractive personality, and was a good speaker, but perhaps more

naturally a writer. Ultimately he obtained office in a Liberal Government and saw a great deal of Lloyd George. I do not think that the combination answered very well, and he died a relatively young man without fulfilling his early promise. I used to dine with him at the House, and on one occasion met there Wells, the author, and I said casually that I was an individualist. "Oh!" said Wells, "I thought you were a Christian." I made no reply! I only saw him once or twice more during his life. I tried on one occasion to get him to support the League of Nations, without success, so that it was clear that our points of view differed a great deal.

The discussion of the details of the Education Bill went on till the end of the summer. In all important matters we were beaten, and the Bill went to the House of Lords, where some of the provisions we desired were duly inserted. When it returned to the Commons the Government declined to consider in detail the amendments that had been made, but asked the House to reject them *en bloc*, which was accordingly done. Naturally the Lords could not assent to this contemptuous treatment of their proposals, with the necessary consequence that the Bill was dropped, with many threats of what the Lords would suffer from their action. I have no doubt that from that moment the Government determined on the policy of the Parliament Bill.

I had spoken almost every night on the Education and other Government Bills, not without some measure of success. I will only refer to one other Bill, because it illustrated a kind of parliamentary procedure which is utterly indefensible.

The Bill in question, introduced in 1907, was one for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister—a long-standing controversy, referred to in *Iolanthe* as an "annual blister". For some time past there had been a majority in both Houses in favour of the change. In the Lords this was mainly due to the influence of certain highly placed personages in the "smart set". In the Commons it was keenly desired by the militant non-conformists—partly perhaps because the Church took the other view. There was, besides, a considerable body of opinion that the change was socially desirable. Whatever may have been the determining reason, the new Government gratified their nonconformist supporters by making it a Government measure. I had no very strong opinion on it, but some of my most respected friends and relations had, and I therefore joined in opposing it. The Government decided to force it through, and insisted that the Committee or Report Stage should be completed in an all-night sitting. There is no more preposterous legislative device than this. As the night goes on, the sense of the House gets less. The form of moving and discussing amendments or asking for an adjournment is maintained, but any real argument is impossible. It becomes a mere test of endurance, in which

the larger body sooner or later succeeds. Any form of closure or guillotine is better than this strange exhibition of primeval barbarism. Curiously, some elderly gentlemen rather enjoyed it; it was for them a kind of "middle-aged lark". Thus was the Bill passed. I have never heard whether it has proved beneficial or disastrous to married life.

Meanwhile the Tariff Reform extremists persisted in their campaign and, while Unionist Free Traders were fighting in Parliament side by side with, and not less vigorously or effectively than their Protectionist colleagues, they had to face in their constituencies the most harassing of all political attacks—namely, that by members of their own Party. About this time there came into existence a political secret society called the Confederates. How numerous it was I do not know. Only one member publicly avowed he belonged to it—a highly respectable friend of mine known as Jack Hills. The sole reason for its existence was to keep Free Traders out of Parliament. I think its name was adopted in the belief that by taking this course it was strengthening the bonds of Empire, and it was no doubt kept secret because its backers were ashamed of it. The defence for it was the same as of much of the other Tariff Reform tactics. Tariff Reform was all that mattered politically, and therefore any political action in its support was justified—the familiar defence of every tyranny. To my mind it was typical of the whole Protectionist movement. Whatever its imperialist origin may have been, its effective support came from those who hoped to make money out of it, as happens in such movements everywhere. And just as the great American Trusts used to make it part of their business to freeze out trade competitors, so this combination waged war against any Unionists who would not accept the new fiscal opinions. I doubt whether in the political world in which I was brought up such a campaign would have been possible. But the substitution of the moneyed for the landed interest as the dominant force on the Right brought a new conception of what was legitimate in party politics. The immediate result was the defeat, for good or evil, of those causes for which the old Tory Party had fought so long, such as the maintenance of the Union, the Establishment of the Welsh Church, the parents' right to the religious education of their children and the Bicameral Constitution of the country. I cannot myself think that the eventual achievement of the Ottawa Agreements is worth the price the Conservatives have had to pay for it.

The political consequence of the loss of the Education Bill was that the Government gave notice in the following Session of a resolution calling for the restriction of the powers of the House of Lords. There had been for some time a parliamentary grievance of the Opposition. In their task of criticising the Government proceedings, one of their most valuable weapons had been the right to call attention to any serious ground of

complaint by moving the adjournment of the House. This had been limited by rules of procedure in various ways, but it still remained, subject to certain safeguards. Latterly the Government Whips had devised a plan for extinguishing it altogether. By an old rule of debate, when once notice had been publicly given by any Member of his intention to raise a particular question, no one else had the right to anticipate him in doing so. The Whips accordingly watched public affairs, and the moment any question of importance cropped up, gave a bogus notice that one of their devoted followers intended to raise it. More than that, if even a genuine notice had been given, it might be blocked by the presentation of a Bill on the subject. Accordingly it occurred to me that I might block the motion on the powers of the House of Lords by introducing a Bill in exactly the same terms as the Government resolution, which I accordingly did. It made quite a little commotion, and I eventually withdrew it on the promise by the Government that they would restore the right to move the adjournment on a matter of urgent public importance.

Meanwhile I and others were making strenuous efforts to induce the Tariff Reformers to abandon what may be called their Confederate tactics. Many of my old Conservative friends, like Walter Long and Alfred Lyttelton, sympathised with me, and many letters passed between us on the subject. Perhaps if I could have approached Chamberlain directly more might have been done. But his health had broken down and he was already ill of the disease of which he died. To my mind it was the proscription of men who were, in all respects, excellent Conservatives except that they could not swallow Tariff Reform whole, that caused the bitterness of the controversy and the consequent ill-effects on the electorate. The following extracts from letters I wrote at the end of 1907 will show what I felt then. After declaring that there was no sign of reaction from the Liberal victory of 1906 and that this was due to the controversy in the Party over the Fiscal Question, I went on:

“The most obvious remedy is to discover a common platform. Can this be done? Let us look at the conditions of the problem. On the one side you have the school represented best by Bonar Law. In private they are frankly protectionist. They aim at establishing a scientific tariff on the lines of that in Germany. They include a very large body of opinion in the country and anything short of the German tariff they would accept merely as an instalment. On the other side are those who are free traders just because they reject protection. That is the essence of their position. The German tariff is just what they are determined to resist. How is it possible for those two schools to work together honestly on Fiscal Questions. Nor is

the difficulty merely theoretic. For four years Balfour has devoted a vast amount of the highest intellectual effort to discovering a fiscal policy which should be acceptable to protectionists and not objectionable to Free Traders. His formula has been to make proposals which can be plausibly argued to be reconcileable with Free Trade and yet are certainly steps essential to the ultimate establishment of protection. To the question whether that is as far as he is going addressed to him in various forms by both wings of his supporters he has necessarily refused to reply. What has been the result? Sometimes both wings have claimed him as an adherent. At others both have rejected him. Meanwhile the body of the electors regard his utterances as either intentionally ambiguous or else marked by culpable levity. I cannot believe that this is due to any clumsiness on Balfour's part. If anyone could reconcile the irreconcileable it would be he. But it cannot be done. And the attempt to do it merely taints the party with a suspicion of dishonesty, the most fatal of all accusations in English politics. . . .

"Another solution suggested is that one or the other of the wings of the party should abandon their opinions—generally the Free Traders. That may be put aside as impossible. X. Y. thinks that the proper plan is to turn and keep the Unionist Free Traders out of the House of Commons. He forgets that what we have to do is to increase the Unionist Vote at the Elections. It seems to me insane to think this can be done by driving from the party—for that of course would be the result—a section of opinion small it may be in numbers but not without some influence. . . . To me it seems that our only hope lies in a precisely opposite direction. The bitterness of our controversy arises not from a difference of opinion in economic theory or even in its political application. Take away proscription and nine-tenths of the venom of our differences is gone and with it many of the worst electoral features of the situation would disappear. There would no longer be the same necessity for the carefully balanced sentences in which Balfour and Lansdowne speak of the subject. They would be able clearly and definitely to state what they would do and also what they would not. All Unionists would, if they honestly could, fall into line with them and if not they would not feel the same necessity for struggling for their right to remain in the party. They would consequently state their opinions when it was necessary to do so as moderately as possible."

And after urging a declaration by moderate Unionist leaders in this sense, I concluded by saying that a great fiscal change will not be carried except by a clear decision of the electorate, as eventually happened.

This letter was communicated to Walter Long, and I sent him proposals for specific terms of a fiscal armistice. What actually happened to these I do not know. They certainly were not accepted even as the basis of discussion.

Various secondary measures were discussed in Parliament—Licensing, Scottish Bills, an Irish Councils Bill, which was withdrawn, and an Education Compromise Bill, making some concessions to the denominational points of view, but not enough to satisfy the demands of those who thought that Christianity was essential to any real education, and that it could only be taught effectively as professed by some Church. These measures were dealt with by the two Houses according to the then established practice, and no acute political question arose. But in April, to the great loss of the country, Campbell-Bannerman, with his broad common sense and equitable temper, resigned for reasons of health and was succeeded by Asquith as Prime Minister with Lloyd George as Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was evident that the Government was losing ground in the country, and unless something could be done to "stoke up" the constitutional issue, there was much probability that it would disappear at the next General Election, as doubtless some members of the Cabinet hoped it would. That, no doubt, was the origin of the Lloyd George budget of 1909, with its intentionally controversial proposals for land taxation.

A subsidiary reason for this plan may have been the awkward position of Women's Suffrage. Vigorous propaganda had raised it from a question of academic interest to an urgent political issue. The Cabinet, like all other political bodies, were sharply divided in opinion on this question. The new Prime Minister and Churchill were strongly opposed to it; Grey and Lloyd George were in its favour. Of the Parties, most Liberals were for it and most Conservatives were against it. I was, like my father, in favour of the enfranchisement of women, but certainly not of everything that was done by some of its advocates. For these were the days of the militant suffragettes, who believed that by breaking the law they would force Parliament to treat their claims seriously. Unfortunately, there appeared to be some truth in what they said. There was no doubt that the Party machine on both sides was anxious to side-track the whole question, which interfered with their clever devices for gaining a seat here or defeating a rebel there. Supporters of the suffrage had good grounds for their complaints of the insincerity of Members of Parliament. But I could not agree that this was sufficient ground for imperilling and attacking what to me was almost the most important of all political principles—namely, the supremacy of the law. So that I was in a recurrent difficulty. I advocated the grant of votes for women in the House of Commons, and the next day the suffrage extremists would make a disturbance in the Gallery, or some-

thing like a riot in Parliament Square, or perpetuate some perverse folly like setting fire to postal pillar-boxes. This acute stage which began about this date, lasted, with indeterminate results, till the outbreak of the First World War, and was suspended until the conclusion of peace, when the vote was granted to women because their help in the war had been so valuable!! Even so, they are still excluded from the House of Lords, to show how much more rational men are than women!!

It will be seen that on Women's Suffrage, as on the Fiscal Question, I found myself out of sympathy with extreme Right opinion. I began to doubt whether I should not be happier on the other side. At least, I thought, I might try to reach a central position in which I might remain as an Independent in Parliament. Similar doubts assailed other Unionist Free Traders. The practical question arose what the Liberals would do if a sitting Unionist Free Trader were opposed by a Tariff Reformer. Would the Liberals stand aside and allow the two types of Unionists to fight it out, or would they seize the opportunity of getting another Liberal into Parliament? Accordingly, I wrote privately to Asquith making this inquiry. However, Asquith replied that he could not give me any definite answer without consulting others, and that I could not agree to. As it happened, the controversy about the Second Chamber overshadowed all minor political questions, and any question of working with the Liberals was then abandoned. For evidently every species of Conservative was bound to resist the abolition of the Second Chamber.

Historically the House of Lords had been at least the equal of the House of Commons. Indeed, till the end of the eighteenth century it was probably the more important body of the two. When Pitt formed his Government in 1784 to fight the Fox-North Coalition the Cabinet contained no Member of the House of Commons except Pitt himself. All the others were Peers. Even in 1902 there was no serious protest against a Peer for Prime Minister, and Edward Grey was, I think, the first Foreign Minister for many years who was in the House of Commons. So that down to the beginning of this century the popular authority of the House of Lords, though diminished, was considerable. Its members were not elected by the people, but its claim to represent them as well as the other House was not absurd. It was the enlargement of the franchise in 1867 and 1884 which made inevitable the subordination of the hereditary to the elective body. This result was postponed by the fact that the House of Commons was predominantly middle-class and that, in the Home Rule fight, the majority of the British electors at three successive elections supported the view taken by the House of Lords on that question. Tariff Reform finally changed the political situation. It was a policy propounded by a manufacturer and supported by great funds collected from the

moneyed classes. No doubt from recollections of the old Corn Law controversy many, but not quite all, of the old landowning families adhered to it. Those who opposed it did so quite as much because they were Conservative as because they were Free Traders. Most of the Liberal Peers had become Unionists and gave a general support to the Conservatives, who could therefore on most political questions do what they chose in the House of Lords. Throughout the Parliament of 1905 the Lords repeatedly rejected or emasculated measures sent up to them by large majorities from the Lower House. But this was done at first with prudence. They could, without loss of popularity, reject Birrell's Education Bill, for it had little popular support; and they passed the Trades Disputes Bill, which was beloved by the Trade Unions. They took similar selective action with other Bills. If they could have continued on this course they might have survived for some time and perhaps been remodelled on a more democratic basis. No doubt the Left-wing members of the Asquith Cabinet saw this perfectly well. Accordingly they devised an ingenious plan. If they could induce the House of Lords to take violent action on an issue in which they would be, or appear to be, defending their own interests against the people, then they could be defeated and destroyed. That was surely the origin of the Lloyd George Budget of 1909. Most of it was on the usual lines. But it contained proposals for imposing certain taxes on land. They were not very heavy. Indeed, the complication of the machinery for levying them was so great that it was doubtful whether they would produce any nett revenue. I remember, in opposing them, quoting the old rhyme:

"When I was young, I had no sense  
I bought a shilling with eighteen pence."

Their object was not revenue but political advantage. The taxes were fought unsuccessfully in the House of Commons, and then I heard that it was intended to ask the House of Lords to reject them. Perhaps the governing motive for such a step was impatience of the Tariff Reformers to get something done—that fatal attitude—before their great leader definitely passed from the scene. Whatever the reason for it, the policy seemed to me little short of insane. I went to see Balfour, and found him in his house at 4, Carlton Gardens, and his secretary—Jack Sandars—with him. I felt so strongly about it that I had prepared notes of what I should say. I do not now remember what they were. But no doubt I enlarged on the fact that finance had for many years been regarded as exclusively the province of the Commons; that even in the middle of the nineteenth century the Lords had been unable to make good their rejection of the Paper Duty, and that, since most of the Lords were land-owners, their action in rejecting a land tax must necessarily appear the

reverse of disinterested, especially when it was contrasted with their willingness to sanction a tax on the poor man's bread. However, I made no way. Balfour listened with perhaps something less than his usual courtesy, and I retired.

The Lords rejected the taxes, and the Government delightedly advised a dissolution. I was in a difficulty. The Tariff Reformers had been carrying on a vigorous campaign against me in Marylebone without, as far as I know, a word of reproof from the leaders of my Party. There was a meeting of my Association, and with some difficulty I secured a majority in my support. Nevertheless, a Tariff Reform candidate—one Jebb—was started against me. My friend, George Bowles, was in an even worse position. I rather think his Association voted against him. In this position I received an invitation to go and stand for Blackburn, with Bowles. We were to stand as Unionist Free Traders. One of the sitting Members was Hornby—also a Free Trader and a member of a prodigiously popular family. Another Hornby had been the captain of the Lancashire cricket eleven. We were to have Hornby's full support, and everyone agreed that, if he could convey his popularity to us, we were sure of success. He scarcely ever attended the House of Commons or even made a political speech in Blackburn. But he used to walk about the town with his pockets filled with sweets which he gave to all the children he met. That and the slogan "Hornby for Blackburn"—as had been the case ever since the Reform Bill of 1832 (at least, so we were told)—was his whole amply sufficient political ammunition.

Bowles and I therefore decided to accept this offer. Then came a belated proposal from the Tariff Reformers (or some of them) that if I would stand again for Marylebone they would support me. But no similar proposal was made with regard to Bowles, and obviously I could not desert him. So we went North together.

Blackburn was not quite unknown to me. It is geographically in the Darwen Division of North-East Lancashire and, as the law then stood, free-holders in Blackburn had votes in the Darwen Division. When, I was electioneering for my brother, who from 1885 to 1890 was Member for Darwen, I consequently heard and saw something of the Blackburn people. I knew them to be extremely keen politicians and to constitute the best public-meeting audience in the whole of England. Bowles and I were therefore sure of a good hearing, for the tradition of that part of the country was well established that there should be no attempt to break up political meetings or prevent any candidate from presenting his case. When we got there we were most hospitably entertained by our supporters, but we were advised that it was not desirable for our wives to come up with us at first. Bad advice, based on exaggerated fears that they

might be regarded as frivolous and fashionable by the "horny-handed sons (and daughters) of toil". As a matter of fact, after a short time we took a little house on the outskirts of the town, to which Mrs. Bowles and my wife came, and did us nothing but good. The contest proceeded, and we did all the things usual on such occasions. We were—or appeared to be—very warmly received, particularly by the mill-girls, with their shawls and their picturesque head-dress. We attended continual meetings and answered hundreds of questions. We went to one public dance, where Bowles had a great success, one girl throwing her arms round his neck and, when that was applauded, repeating the gesture! My welcome was less embarrassing, but I had to dance the then popular Lancers.

Meanwhile our opponents represented the allied Liberals and Labour Parties. One was Sir Thomas Barclay—a highly respectable Liberal lawyer—and the other was the much more formidable Philip Snowden. He evidently felt quite sure of victory (though, as a fact he was second on the poll), for he took scarcely any part in the contest. Our supporters were very sanguine, particularly about myself. But in the result we were both defeated, and by substantially the same very considerable majority. I have already said the only outside assistance we received was from F. E. Smith, who made a brilliantly successful speech on our behalf. Even the local Tariff Reformers would do nothing to help us. The only side-show—so to speak—was the attitude of the extreme Protestants. They, of course, approved of my opposition to Home Rule, but were much shocked because I was in favour of the modification of the Declaration required from the King on his accession, so that he should only have to say that he was not a Roman Catholic, and not be forced to add theological objurgations against the form of Christianity professed by millions of his subjects. However, I don't think this bigotry affected any serious number of the electors.

We were beaten soundly, and I have only once been to Blackburn since, when I spoke at a rather poorly attended meeting on behalf of the League of Nations. One impression I brought away from the contest, and that was that Conservatism was no longer so popular as it had been in the old Darwen days. I was told of more than one operative who had been a strong Conservative and had gone over, not to the Liberals, but to the Labour Party. Looking back, I cannot doubt that we should have been defeated whatever we had said, and that Tariff Reformers would probably have done even worse.

We returned South—rather exhausted—and I was told by the doctor that I must take a holiday or I should be an old man. Accordingly my wife and I decided to go to South Africa, where my brother-in-law—Selborne—was high Commissioner. We went out in a Union Castle ship with

several of Milner's young friends—then known as the *Kindergarten*—including Lionel Curtis and Duncan. We had a very pleasant voyage out, with much talk. We stopped a few hours at Madeira, and went up the hill to breakfast and down again on a kind of sledge, and so on to the Cape, thence to Johannesburg and Pretoria, where we stayed at Government House with the Selbornes. It is one of Herbert Baker's houses, in which he has achieved a wonderful combination of comfort and dignity. It stands on high ground, looking south over the veldt. The view was beautiful in any weather, but perhaps most attractive when there was thunder about and one could see at great distances in that clear atmosphere several thunderstorms going on at the same time. We saw some of the sights, as, for instance a gold-mine in the Rand. Pleasanter than one of our English coal-mines, it looked quite clean, and there was plenty of head room. On the other hand, there were banks of loose and very sharp stones one had to traverse which I found very painful! We were shown the accommodation for the Chinese labourers—the “slavery” of the 1905 Election. We also saw a diamond-mine—the “Premier”, I think it was called—which as a sight was disappointing. It was just a saucer-shaped excavation from which blue-grey clay was dug wherein the diamonds were found. The chief difficulty was to prevent them being stolen, which required elaborate precautions and control.

But to me much the most interesting thing was the people. There were the British mine-owners and their employees—men no doubt of energy and ability, but not specially attractive. There were also some of the Boer leaders, including Botha and Smuts, who I then saw for the first time. They were very agreeable. Botha, to the amusement of my host and hostess, talked very sympathetically of my Free Trade views. I thought him very sound and clear-sighted. Smuts I need not say any more about than that I found him then as brilliant and receptive as I have always found him since.

One of my pleasant recollections is of an afternoon visit to Madame Botha. My sister drove us there in a carriage and pair with coachman and footman, and this already rather old-fashioned turn-out caused an unrehearsed comic interlude. Tea-time arrived, but no tea. After waiting awhile, our distinguished hostess went to inquire, and found that the food and drink prepared for her guests were being presented with much ceremony to the coachman on his box. He, her little native maids had decided, was a great chief, too grand to come into the house.

After spending some very delightful days at Government House—I have never enjoyed a visit more—we returned to Cape Town by the railway through Bloemfontein. The trains were quite comfortable, the only trouble being the quantity of sand which continually enveloped one. We

stayed for a night or two with Dr. Jameson, at that time Prime Minister of the Cape, and then re-embarked for England, which we reached in traditional March weather—bitterly cold.

We found the Parliament Bill controversy in full blast. Being out of Parliament, I took little part in the various manoeuvres by the Party Leaders on both sides. First there were the Financial Measures rendered necessary by the rejection of the Budget in the previous year. They were rather complicated and are now wholly uninteresting. They were accompanied, or rather followed, by the Liberal proposal for limiting the powers of the House of Lords. That proposals of that kind would be the result of the rejection of the Lloyd George taxes must have been obvious to everyone, including the Conservative leaders. Indeed, it was, as I have said, almost the avowed object for which the taxes were proposed. But there was no sign that any plan of defence had been made. To satisfy the Tariff Reform fanatics, the House of Lords had been induced to give battle on the ground deliberately selected for that purpose by its opponents, and when the attack was made there was no effective reply. True, the food taxes were more or less allowed gradually to sink into the background, but in such a way as to make it clear that they would be revived at the first opportunity. There was also a good deal of talk about Second Chamber reform. Lord Rosebery produced one plan which Lord Lansdowne doubtfully blessed. Lord Newton had another, and Lord Wemyss a third, and eventually Lord Lansdowne moved resolutions on the subject. Meanwhile Balfour confined himself to dialectical attacks on the Government, and the Government proposed a series of resolutions, duly carried by their majority in the House of Commons, on which the Parliament Bill was to be founded. On April 18th the Bill was issued, and on May 6th King Edward VII died, adding further complications to the political situation. There followed the passage of a budget like the Lloyd George Budget, but less controversial, and then a prolonged conference between political leaders on both sides. No one was allowed to know what it discussed, but it occupied time till the autumn. Then came further obscure manoeuvres, quite unintelligible to an observer like myself outside Parliament, and at last Lansdowne presented his resolutions admitting that the House of Lords must be reformed and its powers lessened in finance, but rejecting the other parts of the Government scheme. His resolutions were passed by the Lords, and thereupon Parliament was again dissolved.

I received and accepted a rather belated invitation to stand for the Wisbech division of Cambridgeshire. The contrast with Blackburn was complete. It was purely agricultural—flat Fen country, only a few inches above sea level. At first the weather was fairly dry. Then came rains, and the great ditches became canals which could only be crossed by a few rare

bridges, so that communications between one part of the constituency and another became lengthy and difficult. Most of the electors were merely apathetic, but here and there a tradition of disorder prevailed and meetings were broken up. There was some class division between farmers and their labourers. In one district where the farmers happened to have been Liberals, their labourers had been Conservative. Unfortunately for me, some little time earlier the landowner sold to the farmers their holdings, and they in due course became Tories, while their employees went over to the Liberals.

As far as special political questions counted at all, the main assets for the Liberals appeared to be the food taxes and the interference by the Lords in finance. There was also a charge that I was against Old Age Pensions—*inaccurate but understandable*. My opponent—Neil Primrose—made the most of these arguments, and defeated me, not unexpectedly.

I had some help from outside, including one well-known Tariff Reformer, who was, however, much offended by being asked to speak from the same platform as my friend Bowles, who was no more of a Free Trader than myself! That showed how much split the Party still was. After the election I began to consider my position. I even played with the idea of forming an independent Conservative Party—an ancient will-o'-the-wisp which has often misled politicians who have lost their way! A good many Conservatives were much disgruntled, especially as they realised more and more that their leaders had entered into a battle in which not only the old two-chambered Parliament but also such causes as the resistance to Home Rule and Welsh Disendowment were endangered, without any serious appreciation of the consequences. They saw a few improvised defences thrown up, but realised that they would not—perhaps could not—be held. I notice in one of my letters about this time that I contemplated writing to Balfour to explain that I could no longer regard him as my leader!

Meanwhile the Parliament Bill went through the new House of Commons. There were many Tories, of whom I was one, who wanted the House of Lords to prolong the fight, in spite of the fact that Asquith announced that the new King had promised to make whatever Peers were necessary to overcome the Lords' resistance. Such people thought that a swamped peerage was better than one which had accepted defeat. In either case, they believed that the effective power of the Second House to resist far-reaching change was gone, and it was better that people should know that that bulwark of safety was no longer there.

Looking back on it, it seems as if the importance of the final issue was chiefly a matter of tactics. Once the electors had decided, as they did in 1911, against the House of Lords, it was done for as a really independent

legislative body. Owing partly to the folly of its friends, like Humpty Dumpty it had tumbled down, and could not be set up again. It is possible that the country would have been content with an entirely new Constitution and an elective Second Chamber. But it soon became clear that none of the regular politicians wanted that, not even a Conservative House of Commons. That being so, the House of Lords, unless it is entirely reconstituted, must for the future be content to be an influential advisory body, a glorified Debating Society, if you like to call it so, with power to make suggestions as to minor points in Bills and also to ask the House of Commons to reconsider even major points of policy, with the understanding that in the end the view of the People must prevail. In order to make it more effective for these new duties, everything possible should now be done to increase the personal authority of its members. For that reason, if the present House of Lords or anything of the kind it is to remain, I should like to see a power of creating life peers, so that important people might come there, even if they did not wish that their sons should have membership of a Second Chamber thrust upon them. Similarly, I would admit any able or influential person, even if she was a woman. It is possible that, if present tendencies continue, the legislative power of the House of Commons may diminish. More and more the Cabinet may be the true law-making body. Already the actual Divisions on important Bills in the House of Commons matter far less than they did, since they are all foregone conclusions. Debates, owing to the presence of the Chief Ministers and ex-Ministers, are of importance. Speeches by the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition and a few others are still read. But the other contributions are ignored far more than they were a century ago, as is evident from the lessening space that they occupy in *The Times*. May not this be a great opportunity for a revived House of Lords? May it not become the place in which well-informed discussion is better carried on than anywhere else? Above all, is it not essential, in these revolutionary days, to have an effective Second Chamber which can insist that novel and far-reaching proposals shall be submitted to the electorate before becoming law?

If this be the case, it may turn out that the Parliament Bill was an incident in our constitutional development. That, however, does not alter the criticism of Conservative leadership on that occasion. I, at least, felt very strongly, in the summer of 1911, that events had made Balfour's continuance as Leader highly undesirable. I had been sent to Harrogate to cure the eczema from which I have suffered all my life. While I was there I met Jack Sandars, Balfour's secretary, who had heard that, despairing of regaining my seat as a regular Conservative, I was considering the possibility of standing as an Independent. He spoke to me about this

earnestly—and no doubt rightly—advising me against it. He then asked me what I thought about Balfour's position, and I told him frankly that I believed that, in his own interest as well as in that of the Party, he had better resign the leadership. That was in September, 1911.

Early in October the Member for the Hitchin division of Hertfordshire died suddenly and, with the assistance of my eldest brother—then, as always, generously given even when our opinions were not absolutely identical—I was selected as the Conservative candidate.

Before that happened, and in the course of the election campaign, I was asked about my views on the Fiscal Question. I replied that I was in favour of retaliatory duties, if required, in order to induce other countries to reduce their tariffs; that I was in favour of preferential treatment for trade within the Commonwealth, but against a tax on corn or general Protection. Finally, I would not oppose any fiscal proposal approved by the Leaders of the Party.

That was a considerable change from the original attitude of a good many Unionist Free Traders. But the position was now very different from what it had been. Chamberlain was incapacitated and, with the existing condition of Parties in the House of Commons, there was no chance of any considerable fiscal change being made. In fact, the question receded into the political background during the next three years—and then came the First World War.

In the result, I was elected by an increased Conservative majority against a Liberal opponent, and held the seat without difficulty till I took a peerage. While the contest was in progress came the news that Balfour had resigned the leadership of the Party and was succeeded by Bonar Law. I telegraphed to him expressing my deep regret that circumstances had forced me to oppose him on various occasions, and received a very cordial reply. It was one of his most attractive qualities that, though in some ways impatient of opposition, he never allowed political differences to affect his personal feelings.

The main question discussed at the election was Lloyd George's Insurance Bill. The slogan for it was that it would secure for everyone ninepence worth of insurance for a fourpenny contribution—"Ninepence for fourpence". It was bitterly opposed by some of the Friendly Societies, who maintained that they gave their members greater advantages than they would gain under the Bill. This involved many discussions on figures, lending themselves very easily to misrepresentations. I took the precaution to prohibit my election organisation from using any leaflet on the subject, wherever it came from, unless it had been personally approved by me. It was a fortunate decision. There was a local Friendly Society at Buntingford, a small town in the constituency, which we said in a carefully

worded leaflet would suffer under the Bill. Very soon after my return, Lloyd George, speaking on the Third Reading of the Bill, made an attack on me, as well as on Aubrey Herbert, who was returned at the same time for Yeovil. It was the Buntingford leaflet that he used for the attack on me and made an effective parliamentary case. Luckily I remembered enough of the facts to make a reply which my Party regarded as adequate, so that, on the whole, the incident did me no harm. A few days afterwards we met accidentally in the Lobby, whereupon Lloyd George, leaning over to my ear, whispered "Buntingford", with that Celtic charm which was one of his great assets. I could only laugh.

Besides the Insurance Bill, nothing much was done in that session beyond the ordinary routine legislation. In 1912 the Welsh Church Bill and Home Rule were reintroduced so that they could benefit by the procedure of the Parliament Act. For the most part, the debates were dull—reproductions of the old controversies. But Lloyd George infused some life into the Welsh Question by charging the principal opponents of the Bill with being beneficiaries under Henry VIII's spoliation of the monasteries. As an argument the accusation was absurd. There was no evidence whatever that the Cavendishes which he mentioned had anything to do with Henry VIII's policy. They served the State and received rewards by the gift of lands, some of which may have originally belonged to Ecclesiastical Corporations who had been deprived of them for reasons which were at least plausible. So that the very foundation of the charge was weak. But even if there had been more in it than there was, what reason did it afford for their successors two or three centuries later to be precluded from resisting a renewal of such ecclesiastical deprivations, carried out with even less reason than those under Henry VIII? After all, the dilemma was complete. Either Henry VIII was wrong and his proceedings should not be imitated, or he was right, and those that benefited from them, and still more their remote successors, had nothing to be ashamed of.

However, reason was not Lloyd George's strong point. Emotion was the oratorical weapon he preferred. I can see him now, facing the land-owners of the Opposition and telling them that their hands were "dripping with the fat of sacrilege". It was very entertaining, but a little thrown away on the solid middle-class Englishmen who formed the bulk of that Parliament.

The Bill passed, as did also the Home Rule Bill, and was duly rejected by the House of Lords, to be brought up again in the two next years—if the Germans had not interrupted.

Meanwhile, in the autumn of that year the Marconi incident began. The Government had been advised that it would be desirable to erect six big wireless stations in order to make a chain of radio communications

through the Empire. Accordingly they negotiated with various undertakings, and arrived rightly at the conclusion that the Marconi system would be the best for the purpose. Unfortunately, Marconi shares had become the subject of an extensive Stock Exchange gamble, affecting both the English company and the allied American company. The brothers of Sir Rufus Isaacs—then Attorney-General—were concerned with the Marconi companies, and this was perhaps partly the origin of a number of rumours charging members of the Government with corrupt dealings in the shares of a company which was to erect large and costly works for the Government. The rumours were so prevalent that it was decided to appoint a Select Committee to investigate firstly the contract and secondly the rumours. That, as I have elsewhere said, was the first mistake. A Select Committee is a body, in this case of some fifteen in number, chosen from Government and Opposition Members of the House in proportion to their numbers. No worse instrument can exist for investigating charges involving any Party or personal questions. The best tribunal for such a purpose is a court of law and, if for any reason that is unavailable, then a commission of judges. This Select Committee sat intermittently for months. I was one of its members, and we early investigated the contract, which we approved. We then proceeded to the rumours, and made little progress until the Easter of 1913. During the recess it was arranged, presumably by Ministers, that the French newspaper the *Matin* should publish an extreme version of the charges. Whereupon the incriminated Ministers brought an action for libel against it, and then for the first time they told in public what had actually occurred. From this statement it appeared that there had been speculative dealings by the Ministers, not in the English Marconi shares, but in the American. The details are no longer of interest. The result was that the Select Committee unanimously found that there had been no corruption. But that was as far as unanimity went. The majority, by a strict Party vote, animadverted on the recklessness of the rumours and defended the action of the Ministers. The minority accepted a draft Report by Amery and myself saying, in effect, that while there had been no corruption, there had been great indiscretion by the speculation in American Marconi shares in the circumstances, and that the Ministers had made a grave mistake in not telling the whole story when the matter was first raised in the previous October.

The Report was discussed for two days in the House. The Ministers admitted they had made mistakes, for which they expressed regret, but vehemently denied that there had been any corrupt motive in what they had done. In the result a resolution was passed by a Party vote accepting the expression of regret by the Ministers, saying they had acted in good

faith and that there had been no corruption. The Opposition wanted the House to express regret at the transaction, and not merely to accept the regret by the Ministers. In the result no one thought the Ministers corrupt and no one approved what they had done. The terms in which the result was expressed were perhaps of less importance.

I have said so much on the subject because the whole incident illustrates the immense importance of the rule debarring officials from dealing in shares which may even appear to have some relation to their official positions. Since that time the rule has been more than once enforced with pitiless severity. The minority of the Committee were vehemently attacked by Lloyd George, and he endeavoured to show that relatives of mine had done things quite as bad or worse. There was no truth in such allegations, and they fell to the ground. It was satisfactory to me to know that neither Isaacs nor Lloyd George suffered personally in consequence of the proceedings. Sir Rufus became Chief Justice and the Viceroy of India and received well-deserved rewards. Lloyd George continued in office and became a great War Minister. Neither of them bore any malice against myself.

The only other political happening that I was much concerned with before the War was the struggle for Women's Suffrage. I have already said all that need be said on the general questions involved, and will only add that the followers of the Pankhursts continued their outrageous proceedings until the War broke out in 1914, after which, by general consent, the whole question was postponed till peace was restored.

Though I took little part in other political events of these years, I could not avoid some participation in the renewed Irish Question. By the Home Rule Bill, Ulster was to form part of the new Dominion and be subject to the Home Rule Government. This raised violent indignation in those Northern Counties which had a Protestant majority. Threats of rebellion were made, and there was some preparation for fighting. Even the troops were affected, and there was something approaching to a menace of mutiny at the Curragh. Naturally the Unionist Party could not remain unmoved, especially as its new Leader—Bonar Law—took a very strong line in concert with Carson and F. E. Smith. To emphasise their position, a “covenant” was signed, pledging the signatories to resist the establishment of a Home Rule Government at least in Ulster. This was signed by many English Unionists, and I was urged to be one of them. I had considerable doubts about it. I doubted if it was justifiable to engage in civil war because injustice was feared. On the other hand, the Home Rulers, both English and Irish, were very truculent. So that it was possible that hostilities might actually break out. To sign the covenant meant something like approval of what Carson and his friends were doing, and I had

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to ask myself whether I should be prepared to join in the fighting if it took place. In the end, and partly, I am afraid, to avoid further controversy with my Party, I agreed to sign. As it happened, a compromise was reached by which Home Rule was granted, but six of the Ulster counties were excluded. But I was not very pleased with my own conduct.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIRST WORLD WAR

THOUGH I did not know it at the time, the outbreak of war was the end of my life as an unofficial Conservative Member of Parliament. At the beginning of 1914 Lloyd George had declared in a speech that our relations with Germany were better than they had been for many years. But that was only on the surface. In fact, the internal situation in Germany was driving their Government towards war. I believe the Emperor wished spasmodically to avoid it. He hoped that by the notorious policy of sabre-rattling, coupled with flamboyant speeches by himself, he could keep his militarist subjects, led, it is said, by his eldest son, from pushing things to an extreme. If so, he was attempting a manoeuvre which has very rarely been successful and in this instance ended in disastrous failure. The militarists merely waited for their chance. They hoped that they would be able to crush France first and then proceed against us. And no doubt they interpreted domestic events here as evidence that we perhaps could not, and certainly would not fight. Their delusion may have begun with our military misfortunes in the Boer War. It was continued by the anti-Imperialist reaction after that war and the failure of Tariff Reform to revivify Imperialism. Then came the Liberal victory of 1905 and all the increasing industrial and political disturbances which culminated in the Parliament Act, Home Rule and the grave unrest in Ireland. It is said that the lawless outrages of the suffragettes added their quota to German belief in British incompetence. On the top of all this came the murder of the Austrian Archduke and his wife at Serajevo. It seemed the very opportunity for which the German militarists were waiting. That was on June 28th. On July 2nd Mr. Joseph Chamberlain died. Though he had been incapacitated for a long time, yet his final withdrawal marked the close of a greater era. His Tariff Reform policy was, as I think, mistaken, but it was undoubtedly the outcome of a passionate conviction of the greatness and world importance of the British Empire.

As far as I was concerned, I had not in the least anticipated war. I remember at the end of July talking with a friend at a country house weekend, when we agreed that somehow the foreign situation would be cleared up. We could not believe that any Government would be reckless enough to go to war! Yet it was then practically inevitable. A few days later, on

August 1st, I was at my brother's house at Hatfield. The talk there was that the Cabinet was divided, that Grey and Churchill were for standing firmly by France, but that the other Ministers were more doubtful. I remember that, in consequence of what was said, I sent a message to Churchill saying, I think, that Unionist opinion was strongly in favour of not giving way. That was on a Saturday. On Monday—Bank Holiday—came Grey's celebrated speech which prevented any serious Liberal defection, and on Tuesday at midnight we were at war.

It was the end of an epoch. As Grey said a little later on, "the lights were going out". Till then the general line of the political settlement of 1832 had remained unaltered. The franchise had indeed been very much extended, particularly by the Bills of 1867 and 1884. Nevertheless the landowners—Conservative and Liberal—retained the chief power for many years. It was not till Fiscal Imperialism, led by a manufacturer and supported by the old Protectionist tradition of the landowners, gained control of the Unionist organisation that the so-called middle class obtained the chief power in the country. At first this helped the Liberals. A Tory Party which advocated a revolutionary change in our fiscal system were bad exponents of Conservative feeling, and when they attempted to use the dormant powers of the Second Chamber over finance to force a General Election, they were powerless to resist effectively the Parliament Bill.

It was in that situation that we had to face the greatest danger that had threatened us for a century. We got through it and defeated our enemies. At the end of it the Liberal Party was shattered. Its old war cry of "Peace, Retrenchment and Reform" had not saved us from a desolating war, and the working class began to think that they would do better with a Labour Party and a Labour Ministry to represent Left opinion. They could do no worse.

As far as I was personally concerned, my interest in domestic politics was for the time being suspended. I knew nothing of modern war with its wholesale slaughter and destruction. I remember a little book of sketches called *The Green Curve*, published shortly before 1914. It described what a war would be like, and it was to me profoundly shocking. I put it aside as an exaggeration when it was, in fact, a complete understatement. Little as I knew, I had the sense to describe what we might expect as an "orgy of lust and cruelty". But I hoped and believed that it would last only a few months and that we should then return to our pre-war way of life.

I was within six weeks of my fiftieth year, and therefore beyond military age. For a short time I went on in Parliament, voting obediently whatever the Government proposed. I even made speeches. One was in protest

against a foolish cry by what would be now called "the capitalist classes" that business should be transacted "as usual".

My wife and I received into our house in London two refugee couples, one Belgian and one French. The Belgians were a middle-aged couple who had just returned from South America to find their country in enemy occupation. The French were more cultured, with an aristocratic title. They despised the Belgians, who in their turn disliked them, so that at meals all communications passed through my wife or me.

There was in truth nothing much for me to do in Parliament or at the Bar, and accordingly I went to work at the Red Cross. Arthur Stanley was in charge and, at his request, I undertook a new department called the "Wounded and Missing". Its object was to try to get news of those who disappeared in the war. The War Office could only give the information they received from the Front—necessarily incomplete. The Central Red Cross in Switzerland and the Vatican were sometimes able to find out from enemy sources something about some particular casualty. And there were various subsidiary channels of information through pre-war friendships and also through other wounded in the same regiment. My new department tried to follow these and other similar lines of inquiry, but seldom produced any very definite result. Indeed, it was disconcerting to find how very little was known about the personal details of a battle. I was soon specially interested in the fate of a nephew, the son of my brother Edward, who was in Egypt. We found that his son's regiment had been engaged in fighting near Villers Cotterets, but we could get no certainty as to whether he was a prisoner or had been killed. It was partly to inquire into his case and others like it that at the end of September I went over to Paris, with Stanley's approval, accompanied by Ian Malcolm, a fellow Member of Parliament. There we established a centre for the work in a flat in the Rue de la Paix, staying at first at an hotel. Early in October my wife followed me, and we took a little flat in the Avenue Matignon.<sup>1</sup> I visited Villers Cotterets two or three times, and discovered the graves of several who had been killed there, including ultimately that of my nephew. It was melancholy work. We received many heart-rending letters, particularly from those who wrote with difficulty, and therefore only said exactly what they meant.

Paris had a certain attraction. It was very quiet, not actually blacked out, but dimmed out. All the French officials whom I saw did everything they could to help. But that was very little. The only "incident" that occurred to me was when one day, walking back from my lunch, I saw the whole street filling from the shops and houses with an angry crowd,

<sup>1</sup> While here we heard that my youngest brother-in-law, Francis Lambton, had fallen in the first battle of Ypres. Over forty and a half, without military experience, he was serving as lieutenant in the Household Cavalry.

growling curses at a foot passenger whom they accused of being at least a coward, if not a Prussian spy. The crowd grew more and more menacing till at last the police rescued the man—Caillaux, a well-known politician—and drove him off in a “fiacre”. I believe he was afterwards induced by the Government to retire to South America. It was the first and only time I had been in an angry French crowd, and I found it very intimidating.

Besides the regular work of trying to trace casualties, I was urged when I first got to Paris to do something to improve the means of getting the wounded back to hospital in Paris. This often took four or five days in very ill-equipped trains. Accordingly, I wrote to Kitchener—then Minister of War. The following extracts from a letter of mine will show the point:

“. . . Here are all our wounded suffering from gangrene and tetanus because of the delay in getting them to Hospital. . . . It has been very bad . . .”

and I urged the

“appointment of an authority with power to deal with the whole question, both military and voluntary . . .”

Probably many of the difficulties were just the kind of thing that inevitably happens in war. That was certainly the view held by some of the soldiers. One of them very kindly asked me to dine with him, and discoursed to me on how difficult it was to appreciate the difference between the wholesale slaughter of war and the horror which some single accident excites in peace. Very true! and though I never got near enough to the front to see war as it really is, yet my glimpse of its relatively distant surroundings were among the chief causes of my determination to devote the rest of my life to the maintenance of peace!

In yet another letter I wrote:

“The best part of the day is going round the Hospitals to see wounded officers. They are almost all ready to talk of their experiences and there is an extraordinary unanimity in the view that the German strength is exclusively in their artillery. The moral effect of their big guns is very great!!”

I usually went to British hospitals, including one staffed throughout by women, which seemed one of the best. Occasionally British soldiers were sent by mistake to a French hospital. I heard of such a case in the Val de Grace Hospital, and visited it. I found the patient rather unhappy, chiefly, no doubt, because he had difficulties in understanding and being understood. This was perhaps the reason why he complained of the roughness of the treatment. But it may have been partly due to the want of French nurses, so that surgeons—no doubt overworked—had hastily to examine wounds and renew dressings, work which in our hospitals

was usually shared by the nurse. In any case, I was assured that statistics showed that the French hospitals were as successful as ours, and no one questioned the skill of their surgeons. It must be added that appearances in this particular hospital were not very attractive.

After a few weeks all the British hospitals were moved out of Paris. Some went to Rouen (I think) and some to Boulogne, and we followed them there. It was while I was at Boulogne that I received orders to go up to Saint Omer—the British H.Q.—to see General Macready on the subject of my Red Cross work. I went, and had a very interesting trip, staying with my brother-in-law Billy Lambton—who was Military Secretary to Field-Marshal French, then in chief command of the British Force. I dined with the Field-Marshal and his staff, and was impressed with his astonishing optimism. He asked me whether the House of Commons was sitting, and I said “No! it was adjourned till February”. “It would be interesting”, he replied, “if peace comes before it reassembles”, and then he went on to insist that if we put forward moderate peace terms that might well be the case, “for the Germans are beaten here and they know it”. I gathered from the conversation round the table that it was the general opinion of those present that we should not ask much more than the restoration of Belgium and the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine for France. French himself appeared to have all the qualities of a great soldier, but there were some personalities at H.Q. who did not impress me so favourably.

On the previous day I had had an interview with General Macready about our efforts to trace the wounded and missing. He declared himself very favourable to our objects but evidently regarded us with the suspicion soldiers perhaps naturally have of civilian activities near the front. In particular he absolutely forbade us to open any more graves where soldiers had been buried, as we had done at Villers Cottrelets.

Some suggestion was made that I should go up and see the trenches, but French curtly said there was nothing to see and absolutely forbade it. So I went back to Boulogne, whence, after a few months, our Department of the Red Cross was transferred to London. There we had an office in the drawing-rooms of my brother's house at 20, Arlington Street, which I had known as the scene of many evening parties and dances in my father's time and afterwards.

It was during these months that I became acquainted with Gertrude Bell—a very remarkable person. Her vitality and energy were marvellous, and she was a delightful companion, with a keen sense of humour and an interest in many things. She admired many people—most of all her father, Sir Hugh Bell; also several officials of the Foreign Office and Sir Valentine Chirol. Me she regarded with great friendliness, mingled with a certain

amount of tolerant contempt as a weaker vessel. However, we got on very well together, and I was very sorry that she insisted on going out to Mesopotamia at the end of the war. She thought poorly of the French, and I remember her urging me when I was at the Foreign Office to leave the French alone and let them go to the devil in their own way, "as they certainly will". A vivid and attractive personality!

The Red Cross work went on. In the early part of 1915 I went with Sir Arthur Lawley to inspect various places at the Front, including Arras, which had been a good deal bombarded, though there was no firing when we were there. We went to other places, and incidentally saw my nephew Cranborne at Bethune. Sometimes Lawley insisted on my putting on a military overcoat, which made me feel rather foolish, especially when a French officer insinuated that he had no doubt I was masquerading! However, it was a very interesting experience.

Meanwhile the public at home were getting very nervous, especially at the continued want of success at Gallipoli. It was a serious position, and the failure which eventually occurred was put down chiefly to the Prime Minister—Asquith—and the First Lord of the Admiralty—Churchill. My impression at the time was that if any of the Ministers were to blame it was rather for want of co-operation between the War Office and the Admiralty. There was also considerable anxiety about munitions. In consequence of these doubts and questions, the Conservative leaders felt that they could not continue unreserved support for the Government unless they were given a share in the direction of the war. Accordingly, in May, 1915, there was a Coalition. I was in my house in Sussex, and received a message offering me to be Under-Secretary at the War Office or the Foreign Office, together with the rather unusual addition of a Privy Councillorship. I think this last represented the view of my kind friend Bonar Law that I ought to have had Cabinet office. In any case, I was very glad to accept, and chose the War Office as being more "actual" in time of war! It then appeared that Jack Tennant—Asquith's brother-in-law—was not ready to leave the War Office, where he was Under-Secretary, for the Foreign Office. I therefore went to the latter; so accidental was my association with the "blockade" and the League of Nations, both of which came under the Foreign Office. It also brought me into close connection with Edward Grey, one of the high lights of my life. I had known him for many years—ever since we were at Oxford together. He was a great real tennis player, playing for the University and later becoming the first amateur player in the country. He used to allow me at Oxford to play with him occasionally, giving me long odds with ease. Afterwards I saw little of him till I got into Parliament in 1905. Then until I took office I sat opposite to him, and used to tell my friends that I agreed with him more

nearly than I did with any other Member of the House, though he was an orthodox Liberal and I at that time an equally orthodox Conservative. I think my belief in our fundamental agreement was partly due to that quality which made him the most persuasive speaker that I have ever heard. He was not, in the ordinary sense, a great orator. He could not have swept an audience off their feet, as could some of the Irish or Lloyd George at his best, or my brother Hugh. As one listened to him he appeared to be doing no more than temperately setting out the relevant facts and principles. But at the end the conclusion stated itself, it was irresistible. The very simplicity of his language heightened the effect. He seemed to choose his words merely because they gave the clearest exposition of his thoughts. This made him indifferent to tautology. Having found a word which expressed his meaning, he had no hesitation in using it over and over again. Nor did he reject an argument or a statement because it was obvious, if he thought it necessary to explain his ideas. When he was answering questions and had to reply to what is called a "supplementary", his method was nearly always to repeat, with perhaps some slight variation in emphasis, exactly what he had said before—a method remarkably successful in avoiding indiscreet improvisations in delicate situations. I have heard fastidious people complain that his oratory was commonplace. So, in a sense, it was. The words were ordinary; there were no epigrams or metaphor; and a paradox would have been glaringly out of place. But he was to me delightful to listen to, and on more than one occasion, as in the great speech at the beginning of the war, he shattered opposition.

To work with, he was the most perfect chief. At our first official interview he explained to me in his passionless way that he did not regard me as an ordinary Under-Secretary because I should have normally been in the Cabinet. He hoped, therefore, that I would take a fuller part than usually belonged to my office, and he should be glad to have my advice on any point that turned up; and in that spirit he treated me throughout.

At first I did not have very much to do. Ordinary routine diplomacy was very much cut down. But soon two subjects gave me plenty of occupation. One was the so-called blockade and the other was the treatment of our prisoners in Germany.

As to the blockade, a few words of explanation are necessary. In the old days a town on land or a port was blockaded by having its intercourse with other countries completely severed. In the war with Germany, Austria and Turkey no blockade in that sense could be established. By land we were never in a position to cut their communications with neighbours, friendly to them or even neutral. But a large part of German trade was overseas, and there we could stop—and did stop—any trade going directly to and from Germany. On the other hand, the overseas trade of

## THE FIRST WORLD WAR

a neutral such as Holland or Denmark was free unless it was really disguised trade with Germany. Our problem, therefore, was how to distinguish trade genuinely supplying the needs of such places as Rotterdam or Copenhagen from that which merely passed through those towns on its way to or from Germany. The first step was to guard the sea approaches to Germany. The Channel, with our French ally on the other side, was easily closed to German traffic. The North Sea was watched by a number of our war ships—the tenth Cruiser squadron—strung out from the north of Great Britain to Norway—a laborious task admirably carried out by the Navy in all weathers. As for merchant ships coming from Germany or going to Germany, they were stopped and sent in to British ports as prizes. Traffic from the ports of neutral countries bordering on Germany was supervised by our Consuls in those ports, and such of it as was discovered to be German was prevented from proceeding without much difficulty. There remained the cargoes consigned to neutral ports in Holland and Scandinavia, which were really, but not apparently on their way to Germany. At first the only way to deal with them was to search ships destined for Dutch and Norse ports—which could only be done by sending them in to a British port, since search in mid-ocean, especially with submarines about, was impracticable. That meant considerable delay, and with modern ships of large size great loss for their owners, whatever the result of the search. Naturally the owners raised vehement objection. But at first there was no alternative. The cargo was examined, its composition was telegraphed to London, where it came before a special Foreign Office Committee, presided over by the Solicitor-General, and if they reported that it contained contraband—which roughly meant goods useful for war—so much of it was stopped. There were grave practical objections to this procedure. The worst of them was perhaps the difficulty of dealing with what was called “conditional contraband”—goods that might be used for war or for peace. Cotton was a serious trouble. If it was intended for the clothes of Dutch people or Scandinavians we had no right to stop it. But if it was intended for the manufacture of gun cotton, then it was clearly contraband. Meanwhile a clamour was raised in America that British navalism was trampling on the rights of free-born Americans, and there was a certain Hoke Smith, a Senator, I think, who denounced us very freely. I remember a striking instance of the kind of problem raised by the impact of our blockade policy on American national feeling. After I had become Under-Secretary, the American Ambassador—Page—a diplomat of the best kind who always did his best to smooth over difficulties between the two countries, came to me, ordered by his Government to protest against a cartoon in *Punch* which was thought discourteous to President Wilson. I did not see any harm in the cartoon myself, but, in

view of the immense importance of not offending the United States, I wrote to the Editor of *Punch* and got a coldly civil reply. However, Page was quite satisfied. A week or two later he arrived in my room in a condition of considerable discomfort. He came to make explanations about some eloquent observations of Hoke Smith complaining of all sorts of arrogant misuse of our Fleet by the British Government. I had not heard of the Senator's tirade, and in any case should not have troubled about it. But it would have been uncivil to tell Page that no one in England knew what Hoke Smith said about us, so I only listened silently and thanked the Ambassador for his courtesy.

It was not only cotton. There were similar, if not graver, difficulties with the meat-packers about beef and with copper interests about copper, and so on. The most serious feature of these incidents was the disquiet they caused to Page, who was clearly anxious to do anything he properly could to make American neutrality as little burdensome to us as possible. It was this aspect of the matter which caused anxiety to Grey and to myself. We knew, as everyone ought to have known, that American public opinion was an incalculable force. A section of it was liable to become violently excited against England, and in that condition might take steps against us of the most serious character. I used to liken our position to that of a man walking along a narrow mountain path with a wall of rock on one side of him and a precipice on the other. To keep too near the wall was no doubt undesirable, and might even give him a bruise or two, but to go over the precipice was destruction. As a matter of fact, I should claim that we never made any concessions in the blockade which seriously diminished its efficiency, and we kept on such good terms with America that she ultimately came into the war in time to finish off Germany.

Grey and, to some extent, his Under-Secretary were criticised by people who did not always realise the delicacy of our position. It was often said that if only it were left to the Navy all would be well. That was due to the misconception created by the use of the word "blockade". Had it been described as "economic warfare"—the phrase used in the Second World War—critics might have realised that the action taken by the Fleet, though essential, was necessarily a very small part of the whole operation.

At the same time the original administrative machinery was found to be unsatisfactory. There were several Government Departments concerned, such as the Board of Trade, the Treasury, as well as the Admiralty and the Foreign Office. The result was the inevitable Committee, with all the waste of time and energy caused by it. At last, following some inter-departmental controversy, Grey went to the Cabinet and insisted that the whole operation should be put under a Minister with Cabinet rank and,



EDWARD GREY

after some difficulty, I was appointed, and made a Cabinet Minister, remaining Under-Secretary.

It was characteristic of Grey that the possibility of difficulty arising from two Cabinet Ministers in the same office—which to lesser men has seemed very formidable—never gave him any anxiety. He was, indeed, more than almost any man I have ever known, free from petty jealousies and personal vanities.

Later, after Lloyd George became Prime Minister, I became Minister of Blockade and, later still, Assistant Foreign Secretary, when Balfour was my chief.

While the difficulties and dangers of the so-called “blockade” were still acute, the American Consul-General in London suggested to me that we might get rid of many of them, particularly those attending the right of search, if we could satisfy ourselves when the ship was loaded that her cargo was innocent from a blockade point of view. I immediately accepted that suggestion, and thenceforward a British agent was allowed at the port of loading in America to observe how each ship was loaded. He then telegraphed to us what she contained, and if our experts were satisfied that her cargo was “innocent”, her master was given a certificate—called later a “navicert”—which passed her through the North Sea line of ships.

That was a great improvement, and ships willingly availed themselves of it. For the only alternative was their search in a British port, which, even if the cargo turned out to be “innocent”, meant a serious loss by delay for the ship-owner.

This plan could not have been easily carried out without a system of rationing, as it was called. This, in principle, was simple enough. Experts examined the pre-war overseas trade of each neutral country bordering on Germany. Up to the average pre-war annual figure of the imports of each commodity for the use of that country there was no interference with them unless we had some special information as to their real destination. Above that figure they were stopped—that is, a navicert was refused.

This system became the backbone of the “blockade” and was, I believe, adopted in World War II. Before its adoption there were several other devices, such as the creation, especially in Holland and Switzerland, of bodies of merchants, trustworthy from our point of view, to whom goods were consigned and who would undertake that they would not be transmitted to Germany. There were also Black Lists of neutral firms whom we suspected of being Germanophil. This device was extended to America, and caused indignant remonstrances. The Black List for America meant that British subjects were recommended not to trade with people so listed. Evidently this was well within our rights, and we stuck to it, though with some misgivings. Luckily, when America came into the war, so far from

mitigating action of this kind, the United States Government increased its severity. In addition to these measures, we exercised control over enemy trade through our quasi-monopoly of the supply of coal at coaling stations throughout the world, and also of jute—essential for packing some kinds of merchandise. We further tried to hamper the German financial operations, partly through cable control and in other ways. But, in my judgement, we never succeeded in doing very much in finance.

Much more might be said about the detail of these operations. But I have said enough for my present purpose. Indeed, I would not have said so much except for the fact that the public discussion at the time on the subject brought me again into collision with that type of Imperialist who so much disapproved of my attitude on Tariff Reform.

Another Foreign Office subject that was more or less transferred to me was the care of our prisoners of war in Germany. There was really very little to be done beyond sympathy. We made representations to the German Government through the American Minister in Berlin, who was in charge of our interests till America became a belligerent, and afterwards through the Swiss Minister. At one time I tried to effect an exchange of prisoners, which brought me up against Lord Kitchener for the first and only time in my life. He was Minister for War, and I saw him on the subject. I went to the War Office expecting a placid official talk about it, and was received, figuratively, with blows and curses. Kitchener thought it most dangerous to do anything which might encourage troops to surrender. In spite of my disclaimers, he persisted in denouncing all proposals of the kind, saying that he would resign rather than agree to them, and so on. I told him that his opposition was conclusive and that, even if I wished to press the matter further, I was quite helpless against him. So the matter was dropped. He was a curious man. Doubtless an excellent officer in the field. But I cannot think he was a good administrator. Later on a limited exchange was arranged.

From the early part of 1916 I sat as a member of the large Cabinet of that date, and so came into contact with Asquith as Prime Minister. To me personally he was always most friendly—very easy of access, with a marvellous memory and a loyalty to his colleagues which it is impossible to over-praise. But as the chief of a War Cabinet he was not quite in his element. He was an excellent chairman, quick to understand any point raised, unfailingly courteous to all his colleagues, but apparently regarding it as no part of his duty to initiate solutions of any difficulty or to make suggestions for a new departure in policy. The result was that Cabinet discussions under him were models of propriety and decorum but a little wanting in that liveliness and resource necessary to cope with the prodigious difficulties with which we were faced. He was ready to listen

to any proposal for reorganising the Government, and I went to him with a plan for devolving part of the Prime Minister's work on other shoulders. He read my memorandum and smilingly told me that it amounted to his extinction! I remember telling Austen Chamberlain, who was then Secretary of State for India, something of my ideas. He was profoundly shocked that an Under-Secretary should presume to enter on such topics!

Nothing was done, and the House of Commons became increasingly restive. In the summer of 1916 it was clear that a "crisis" was developing. Perhaps a bold challenge to the critics might have succeeded. But no doubt that would have been difficult in time of war. In the end, after much negotiation or intrigue, whichever it should be called, Asquith resigned with all his Liberal colleagues, to the immense relief of Grey. Grey's general health and his eyesight had broken down. He never cared for politics, he loathed war and abominated personal rivalries. So he was very pleased to be out of it. I remember his asking me in the Foreign Office after he had resigned and before his successor was appointed whether I thought it wrong of him to be so pleased as he was at leaving office. This must always have been his feeling, not only about office, but about parliamentary life generally, and it was shared by his first wife. He told me that in one of his elections he and his wife had attended a meeting where he had not been very well received and that, driving away, she had said to him, "I could not help having a coward hope that we might be beaten". The phrase pleased him greatly. I suggested that, since I thought the charges against Asquith were exaggerated and those against himself completely unfounded, I had better resign. But he was clear that I should do nothing of the kind. It was about that time that I received letters from him containing the following extracts. One was a little earlier and referred to a controversy over the exchange of prisoners of war. It alludes to some suggestion of resignation by me. He says:

"I do think it would be disastrous if you resigned. I am pretty well done after eleven years of this Office . . . and to have to work with another Blockade Minister would be the last straw. . . . Any-one else would have to start without the confidence of Crowe and others . . . and without the knowledge, even if he were as free from personal foibles and angles as you."

The next was written after his resignation and it had been settled that Balfour should succeed him:

"Your letter is a great relief to me. Till I read it I did not know who was to be at the F.O. I believe you to be irreplaceable for contraband and I hoped you would either continue that or take the F.O.

If you were not to take the F.O., I hoped A. J. B. would do it. . . . And now let me thank you for the comfort and encouragement it has been to me to work with you. You will always help those who work with you to keep a high standard of public duty; that is a great gift and I have never worked with anyone who had it in a higher degree than you have. When you came to the F.O. I was jaded and tired by many years of public strain in which also had come to me the greatest private sorrows that it was possible for a man to have. I needed all the stimulus and moral tonic that I could get and your presence and company in daily work never failed to give it me."

One more extract of later date in answer to a letter of mine congratulating him on the entry of America into the war:

"Your letter gave me a thrill of pleasure. I think my personal relations with Page and House, both of whom I cordially liked, did something to make the atmosphere between the two Governments genial, but your own care and judgment in administering the blockade and your interviews<sup>1</sup> have done more good than work of mine."

When Lloyd George had become Prime Minister, three of my colleagues and myself went to see him to offer our resignations, out of loyalty to Asquith and others, unless it was thought that our departure might be prejudicial to the conduct of the war. The reply was to urge us to continue in office and, as I have elsewhere<sup>2</sup> said, we did so. I therefore returned to my work under Balfour and always received the support of the new Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary.

It was about this time we began a careful study of the German Press and other sources of information to see what effect the "blockade" was having. We received the impression that by itself it could not bring the war to an end; but that in case of a serious military reverse, Germany would probably be unable to recover.

The interviews to which Grey refers in one of his letters quoted referred chiefly to my weekly meetings with American journalists. I saw them for about half an hour on a fixed day in each week, and I found them extremely pleasant and absolutely straightforward to deal with.

The rule of our talks was that they put any questions they liked, and I made any or no reply, as I thought best. Sometimes I started a reply and then found I was getting on confidential ground and asked them not to "use" what I had said. They never did. One advantage of the plan of seeing them all together is that they act as a check on one another, so that

<sup>1</sup> That is, with the representatives of the American Press.  
<sup>2</sup> *A Great Experiment.*

even if one of them wishes to be over-sharp he is restrained by professional opinion. English journalists, except on great occasions, prefer separate interviews, which is more laborious for the person interviewed, and, I think, not so satisfactory. With French journalists the trouble is that they have already decided in their own minds what ought to be the Minister's reply, and that is what they report, whatever he may actually say. But on the whole I am glad to believe that my relations with journalists of all nationalities were always perfectly friendly.

I also had, of course, to see foreign diplomats, and there my friend and adviser, the late Sir Eyre Crowe, was invaluable. He was an admirable official, with an encyclopaedic knowledge of foreign affairs, untiring industry and a very vigorous and clear-sighted judgement. We did not always agree—otherwise he would have been of less use to me. But he always knew what he thought and could express his opinion forcibly. If it did not prevail, he would nevertheless carry out what he considered an inferior policy with all his power.

When I was first in the Foreign Office I had a controversy on some question with the Swedish Minister, and wrote to him my views with, I suppose, undiplomatic candour. He was very angry, and talked about making a formal complaint to the Cabinet! Luckily he first went to see Crowe, who smoothed him with great skill, and nothing happened. Sometimes Crowe would sit with me on some international committee, and I remember admiring the skill with which he could utter disagreeable truths without hurting foreign feelings. Only once did I nearly have a quarrel with him. It was over my dealings with the Admiralty. There was, very naturally, a tendency among naval officers to criticise our proceedings. They felt that the Fleet stopped the ships which we afterwards let go. I am speaking of the time before the navicert system was adopted. Complaints came before the Board of Admiralty, and the Sea Lords spoke severely to the First Lord on the subject. When Balfour occupied that position, he suggested that I should attend a meeting of the Board and explain the Foreign Office policy. I was very glad to do this, though rather frightened. I doubt if I made much way with the sailors (though in fact their Trade Division under Captain—afterwards Admiral—Webb became a warm supporter). So I said that I was most anxious to work with them, that it was unsatisfactory to wait for written criticism, and that perhaps if they could send an officer to sit in the Foreign Office and see all the papers he could then tell me personally if he thought a mistake was being made. They agreed, and an excellent officer for the purpose—Admiral de Chair—was given a little room in the Foreign Office. The system worked admirably, and put an end to almost all interdepartmental wrangling. But Crowe was furious. The idea that an outsider should come and sit in the

the sacred Office and see the still more sacred papers and be allowed to criticise policy directly to the Parliamentary Minister without going through what he loved to call "the usual channels" was to his mind little short of high treason. For a week or more he would scarcely speak to me. However, the storm blew over, and when I left the office in 1918 he wrote, in his beautiful handwriting, a charming letter in which, after thanking me for a letter of farewell I had written to him, he said: "You allowed and encouraged me to carry on my work in days of stress and difficulty under your always helpful and patient direction". The "days of stress and difficulty" may perhaps allude to a disgusting personal attack made on him as a pro-German because he had a German mother and a German wife, when if he had any foreign prejudice it was that he was too bitterly anti-German.

Under the new Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary the "blockade" work went on unhindered. Balfour's loyalty to his subordinates was as great as Grey's, nor did the Prime Minister object to my proceedings. One reason was perhaps that the machine had necessarily become complicated. Rationing neutrals involved a lot of detailed figures, which were provided by a sub-department of the Blockade Ministry. Another reason was that, like most successful Ministers, Lloyd George did not interfere with his subordinates unless he thought them seriously in the wrong, and if he reached that opinion he ruthlessly dismissed them. Perhaps he carried this policy rather far, creating with some of us a sense of insecurity which was bad for our work. But I never had anything to complain of.

One change there was for me. Grey, though essentially his health was bad, was not often disabled from doing his work. On the comparatively few occasions when he had to be away, another Cabinet colleague, usually Lord Crewe, carried on for him. Balfour was subject to frequent feverish attacks which completely laid him up for the time and, as I now ranked as a Cabinet colleague, he left me in charge, and the same thing happened when he went to America in the last year of the war. The consequence was that I took a larger part in general international questions besides the blockade, and often attended the War Cabinet. That body consisted of three of four Ministers without departmental work who sat almost every day. The Foreign Minister was not a member, but was summoned whenever the discussions were likely to touch foreign affairs—as very often happened. The theory was that a small body could discuss and decide questions more rapidly and with less formality. There certainly was not much formality about its meetings, and the personality of the Prime Minister insured that the discussions should be marked by plenty of vigour. But the rapidity of the work was rather hampered by the presence of experts and officials to such an extent that the Cabinet Room in Number

10 was crowded to excess. There was an agenda for each meeting and a record of the decisions arrived at, both being prepared by that secretarial genius, the present Lord Hankey. But for his efforts serious confusion might have resulted, for it sometimes happened that some aspect of public affairs outside the agenda had attracted the Prime Minister's attention and was elaborately discussed, while all other business was kept waiting. There was one occasion when a Minister had been summoned to give an account of a mission to Russia from which he had just returned. After waiting for a couple of hours "on the mat", as he afterwards put it, he was told that his business could not be taken that day. He was naturally very indignant.

On the whole the plan produced good results, and perhaps none other could have so well made the most of Lloyd George's personal qualities.

Before the change of Government various events had taken place, such as the Irish Rebellion and the shipwreck and death of Lord Kitchener, but I had nothing departmentally to do with them. The only special piece of work that I was concerned with was the withdrawal of the Declaration of London—a document agreed upon a few years earlier, by which, in the then supposed interest of this country in time of war, certain limitations to the right of a belligerent to interfere with foreign trade were accepted. In the early part of the First World War a considerable outcry had been raised about it here, and though in fact the change brought about in warfare by the conception of total war had made the Declaration futile, it was thought better that, in agreement with our French Allies, it should be abrogated altogether. Accordingly I went to Paris, and there conferred with a number of French officials, including my opposite number, a distinguished academician called Denys Cochin. Our task was to draw up a diplomatic document for the purpose, and I was asked to make a first draft, which I did as shortly and as clearly as I could. When it had been presented, my French colleagues, with many expressions of civility, said it would not do at all. We then sat for several hours while each person spun elaborate phrases, till at last a version adequate in style and dignity was agreed upon! It seemed to a Philistine like myself an almost complete waste of time.

The only other incident directly affecting my affairs was a telegram sent on November 1st by Grey to a meeting of the American League to Enforce Peace to express his sincere desire to see a League of Nations to secure peace after the war was over.

## CHAPTER VI

### INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND THE LEAGUE

At the end of 1916 President Wilson asked the Allies to state what were their war aims. Accordingly the French and English Governments drew up a statement on the subject, in the drafting of which I was asked to collaborate. I say to my shame it was then that I first became conscious of the existence of Czechoslovakia—the French Government claiming, with our concurrence, its independence as one of the objects for which we were fighting. A few months later I made the acquaintance of Dr. Benes, one of the great European figures of our time. He was only one of several foreign representatives whom I saw either on blockade matters or as a deputy of the Foreign Minister. Another was Marcus Wallenberg, a great Swedish banker, whose half-brother—Knut—was their Foreign Minister. But the most interesting personality was Colonel House, the intimate friend at that time of President Wilson. He had no official position in the United States. But he had great knowledge of public affairs and a well-deserved reputation for judgement. He came over several times during the war, and saw a little of myself and a good deal of Grey. He was one of the chief American advocates of the League of Nations, and had his advice been followed we should probably have been spared that disastrous refusal of his country to join it. The quarrel of House with Wilson, of the rights of which I know nothing, was perhaps a chief cause of the League's failure.

Meanwhile through 1917 the war went on, and so did the blockade. My own position became difficult. It was not that I had any serious differences with Balfour or Lloyd George. But, like most people, I hated the war. The slaughter and destruction were beyond anything that I had imagined possible. As far as I could learn, all moral and religious causes had suffered severely. There was no prospect of a generally agreed international settlement after the war. The only hope seemed in the construction of some international system which would ensure a lasting peace.

Accordingly, just before the change of Government took place I circulated a memorandum making proposals for the avoidance of future wars. That was the first document from which sprang British official advocacy of the League of Nations. Apart from the machinery afterwards developed and the details of international co-operation, the broad principle laid down was that no country should resort to war until its grievance had been sub-

mitted to an international conference and a delay of some months had taken place. This was to be enforced in the first instance by blockade, backed up, if necessary, by military action.

The memorandum was circulated to the Foreign Office and criticised there. At my suggestion the Secretary of State referred it to a strong committee, under the chairmanship of the late Lord Phillimore, and they produced the first draft of what afterwards became the Covenant of the League. Field-Marshal (then General) Smuts was attracted by the proposals, and wrote a brilliant pamphlet supporting and enlarging it. These documents were submitted to the Imperial War Cabinet—that is, the British War Cabinet, strengthened by members from the Dominions—and approved with minor alterations by them. It was the document so approved which went to the Paris Conference, and, with certain American amendments, was submitted to and approved by a Commission of the Conference presided over by President Wilson.

I have said so much about the League in *A Great Experiment* that I shall only deal with it very generally in this book. It is enough here and now to say that with the drafting of the memorandum of September, 1916, began the third phase of my public life. My professional life at the Bar was succeeded by my activities as a member of the Conservative Party in Parliament, and that was followed by my absorption in efforts for the maintenance of peace.

When I first put my case for a League of Nations before my colleagues, none of them opposed it. But none of them took much interest in it. It was clear to me even then that to secure for this new international experiment sufficient backing and authority was going to be a very difficult task. A few months after the time of which I am speaking, I wrote to Sir W. Wiseman, a great friend of House, at this time a kind of unofficial British representative at New York, in answer to a letter of his from America. My letter was dated August 19th, 1918:

“MY DEAR WISEMAN,

“Many thanks for your letter of July 18 about the League of Nations.

“I think I look at the problem like this. Here we are suffering from the greatest catastrophe that has perhaps ever occurred, and the worst part of it is that it seems to herald an era of destruction. No one can yet estimate the moral injury that it has wrought. But personally I believe it to be very great and of infinitely greater importance than the material waste, prodigious as that has been. This will, I hope, grow clearer as the excitement of war subsides and will create a very powerful reaction against war.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND THE LEAGUE

"It is that feeling we must harness if any good is to be done. It will not last long, so we have not much time. Its tendency will be against all force. And to be utilised we must aim at converting it into international public opinion. That is why the main thing I look for is to get nations into the habit of co-operation rather than competition.

"Our economic need should help, since the various inter-Allied organisations which we are creating for the war must last into and over the so-called period of reconstruction.<sup>1</sup> Into these organisations we should be ready to admit all nations as and when they are really to be trusted as peaceful members of the International Society.

"But all this will fail as a unifying force unless we add something more. It is a delusion to suppose that the pursuit of material wealth tends to peace. What is wanted is a great ideal, and that must be found in the old Hebrew—and let us add Christian—conception of the reign of Peace. I believe that a great formless sentiment of this kind exists. If it does not, we can do nothing. If it does, we must give it an organ for its expression. That must be found in a League of Nations which shall operate directly by discussion and indirectly by taking charge of some of the national problems left to us by the war, such as the care of backward nations, the government of such special districts as Palestine, and perhaps some of the great social problems which can scarcely be treated except internationally.

"Since beginning this letter, I have seen your telegram giving an account of the President's views. We shall of course comply with his wishes as to the publication of the Phillimore report.

"I am not sure, however, that he realised the immense difficulties there will be in the way of establishing a League of Nations. All the European bureaucracies will be against the idea, including probably the bureaucracy of this country. Nor must it be forgotten that the heresies of militarism have unfortunately extended beyond the limits of Germany, and all the militarists will be against the idea. Finally there will be many people who will fear that the Germans will use the League for their own purposes, lulling us and others to sleep and then falling on us when we have been disarmed. All these people are working already, more or less secretly, against the idea. I wished to publish something, therefore, in order to create and form public opinion and make it vigorous.

"It is, however, very good to hear that the President is ready to discuss the matter and I hope that Reading, when he returns to Washington, will be able to take it up with him in detail.

"If I venture to insist upon the strength of the bureaucracies in

<sup>1</sup> In fact they were all swept away.

Europe, it is because no one who has not actually seen them at work can form any idea of their resisting power. They are very able and honourable, but they are past masters in the art of obstruction and resistance.

“Yours very sincerely,  
“ROBERT CECIL.”

The letter, though nearly thirty years old, might almost have been written to-day. Indeed, except that the San Francisco Charter more fully accepts the conception of force to back the new international machinery, we have made little documentary advance from the Covenant.

My purpose in quoting the letter is to explain how much my hope for the League had superseded all other political interests. Such a state of mind is not easy to fit into the ordinary Party politics of Westminster. It must have made me a rather “difficult” colleague, since I grew less and less to care what happened to my Party or even politically to myself. The only way in which the personal problem could have been resolved would have been for the Party to which I belonged to be as keen for the League as I was. That never happened. The Unionists, though they tolerated the League, and even officially supported it, yet, as I have said, most of them were not much interested in it. There were the two other Parties, but, for reasons which will appear later on, I have not felt free to join either of them. Hence it came to pass that my political reputation at home reached its rather brief climax soon after the close of the First World War.

To return to 1917. In the spring the Germans intensified the submarine operations and the Americans declared war. The last straw was a cyphered German telegram, intercepted and decoded by us, directing a submarine commander to sink a neutral ship “without leaving any trace”! Balfour went on a mission to the United States to discuss peace and I was left in charge of the Foreign Office for some weeks. A few months later, Lord Lansdowne, the very experienced and respected Unionist leader, wrote a letter urging the conclusion of a negotiated peace with Germany. The letter was sent to *The Times*, which refused to publish it, and it was then sent to the *Daily Telegraph*, where it appeared. He was much criticised, not so much because the terms he suggested were in themselves very unreasonable, but rather because it was thought that any unofficial gesture of the kind by a man of Lord Lansdowne’s importance might, by encouraging the enemy, produce the very opposite result to that which he wanted. I have some recollection that Lloyd George asked me what I thought about it. I said that the answer seemed to me to depend largely on the military position. If we were fairly sure of victory, I thought it best to go on. But if the result was likely to be indecisive, it might be different.

In the result, public opinion was clearly against a negotiated peace, and the war continued.

1918 was very harassing. Though we were evidently nearing the end, there were some very alarming setbacks. I remember meeting Winston Churchill in the Lobby of the House during a period of that kind and being immensely cheered by his serene confidence. Eventually the American new forces made themselves felt, and the Armistice was signed on November 11th.

It was in the autumn of this same year—1918—that my brother Edward died. Though he was nearly three years younger than me, we had been brought up very much together. Indeed, I stayed on a little at Eton to give him a start there. After he left, our lives to some extent separated. I went to Oxford, and he went into the Guards. I am not sure whether that was a good plan. Probably he was better employed later on as an Egyptian official under Lord Cromer. However that may be, he had a most vivid and original personality, which is described in the subjoined note by his sister-in-law, who was one of his regular correspondents:

“Lord Salisbury’s fourth son—Edward—Nigs in his own family, Ned to his soldier friends—was perhaps the only one of that generation who shewed a natural instinct for the aesthetic side of things. Colour, form and good workmanship were of interest to him. The objects he brought home from his soldiering abroad, of however little practical use, were good and beautiful of their kind. Because of his profession he was much less at home than his brothers and sisters and seemed less absorbed in political questions—secular or religious—less fond of argument and more fond of reading. Oddly enough he was not at all attracted by London Society, though one would have said he was particularly qualified to shine in that world. He was extremely good-looking, very tall—six foot four—and in uniform magnificent. Very witty and delightful company when in the mood for it but it must be admitted that the mood was an uncertain quantity. He was more reserved than his brothers and sisters and more a man-of-the-world, slightly cynical or disillusioned in his views of life and people, or appeared to be so, and only those, probably very few, who had his confidence would know how much deep feeling, religion and love of simple people and things underlay the brilliant exterior. A tutor in the family, a shrewd observer, considered that of the five brothers Edward was the one who most resembled his father in feature and intellectual ability. Service in the Guards gave little opportunity to develop the real power he shewed later on in his administrative work under the congenial leadership of Lord Cromer. It was from Egypt also that he began to write the

amusing letters, whose success at home was the origin of the published sketches now well-known as *Leisure of an Egyptian Official*.<sup>1</sup> Members of his family who passed through Egypt in 1905 were amused by the magic effect upon their travelling arrangements of the 'Egyptian's Official's' name. Nine years later, Edward Cecil's only son was killed in the first days of the German war; his father—probably a casualty of the same war—died of tuberculosis a month after the peace, fifty years old and, as most of those who knew him thought, with a distinguished career before him."

I had been elected Chancellor of Birmingham University in succession to Joseph Chamberlain—a great honour—and I made my inaugural address in the same month as the conclusion of the Armistice. In it I advocated and explained the League of Nations, insisting that Germany should be a member of it from the outset. I was allowed to nominate a few persons to receive honorary degrees on that occasion, and among them I chose Austen Chamberlain, Maurice Hankey and the Suffrage leader, Mrs. Fawcett.

In December, Parliament was dissolved. It had been kept in being much beyond its proper term because of the war. Among other temporary arrangements, the Bill for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church in Wales had been kept in a kind of suspended animation, and it was now to be put on the Statute Book. I was deeply pledged against the Bill. The mere severance from the State of the four Welsh dioceses did not seem to me so serious. But the taking away of endowments, much needed for the work of the Church, which had belonged to her for centuries, seemed to me, as it still seems, quite indefensible, and I decided to resign rather than make myself responsible for such a step. In doing so I expressly stated that "except on this one point I remained a convinced supporter of the Government". Indeed, owing to one of Balfour's colds, I was in charge of the Foreign Office after my formal resignation. I asked for and obtained the appointment to attend the coming Peace Conference in Paris in charge of the negotiations for the establishment of a League of Nations, of course subject to directions by the Prime Minister. Accordingly I went to Paris early in January, 1919. I took with me as a personal staff Frank Walters—afterwards one of the chief officials of the League at Geneva—Jem Butler, afterwards an Independent Member of Parliament for Cambridge University, and now Professor of History there; Philip Noel-Baker, the lynch-pin of the whole body, later on a member of the League Secretariat, afterwards private secretary to Arthur Henderson, and now Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations; and lastly the present Lord Salisbury, then Lord Cranborne. It would have been difficult to find an abler or

<sup>1</sup> Hodder and Stoughton.

more devoted set of assistants, and I think we worked without a hitch until the Covenant of the League had been made the first chapter of each of the Peace Treaties. We also had the assistance of my wife, Lady Cranborne and Mrs. Noel-Baker.

As I have said, I do not propose in this book to deal in detail with the history of the League. But some account of its general purpose and the incidents of its birth, life and death is necessary if any history of my own life is to be intelligible. For I must repeat that from the end of the First World War to the present time the whole of my public work has been directed towards the maintenance of international peace. That, and that only, was the object of the League. It was originally suggested by the failure to prevent the outbreak of war in 1914. Grey's efforts then were directed to induce the Austrians and Serbians to submit their quarrel over the murder of the Archduke at Serajevo to an international conference. He failed because certain Austrian statesmen, probably with the encouragement of German Ministers and Generals, preferred war. Therefore the main provision of the Covenant of the League was that there should be no resort to war upon any international grievance until all means of settling it should have been tried. Every other provision was grouped round that central conception: e.g. armaments were to be reduced; arbitration tribunals were to be set up; no diplomatic hindrance was to prevent international intervention. In the same order of ideas, international co-operation was insisted on as the first means of preserving peace, and the concluding articles detailed several examples of matters to which such co-operation might extend. As to the machinery, it was roughly the same as that since provided by the San Francisco Charter. There was to be a large Assembly representing all the Members of the League, and a smaller Council consisting of the Great Powers and a certain number of smaller Powers elected by their fellows. Two things are biographically noticeable. I thought the Assembly would meet seldom and be of slight importance. In practice neither anticipation proved correct. I also resisted the presence of the smaller States in the Council, very much on the same grounds as the Russians insist on the right of veto—namely, that only the action of the stronger States is valuable for peace. That opinion was and is due to an over-estimate of the importance of force in human relations. An element of force is necessary, but obviously to be beneficial it must be controlled and directed by reason and justice.

The first step was the acceptance by the main Conference at Paris of a resolution drafted by me, approved with amendments by Lloyd George and moved by him. Clemenceau, who presided over the Conference, never took any part in the discussion of the League, which he regarded as an amiable Anglo-Saxon weakness. But he did not obstruct it or allow

anybody else to do so. Accordingly the consideration of the League was referred to a committee, presided over by President Wilson. House was the other American member, and Smuts and I represented Britain.

We had a number of meetings, which extended over three months. But most of the work was done in the first month. Before we left Paris the President was good enough to write to me thanking me for what I had done. I quote from his letter:

“. . . In the hurry of the breaking up of the session the other day, I did not have an opportunity to congratulate you as you deserve to be congratulated, on the successful termination of the commission on the League of Nations. I feel, as I am sure all the other members of the Commission feel, that the laboring oar fell to you and that it is chiefly due to you that the Covenant has come out of the confusion of debate in its integrity. May I not express my own personal admiration of the work you did and my own sense of obligation?

“Cordially and sincerely yours,

“WOODROW WILSON.

“*Lord Robert Cecil,  
Hotel Majestic.*”

Indeed, I had the opportunity of concentrating on the League which it was impossible for the President to do. Those familiar with the House of Commons will understand when I say that, with reference to the work on the Committee, the President was like the Prime Minister during the discussion of a Bill in Parliament and I was like the Minister-in-Charge. Indeed, I remember Hankey at a dinner about that time chaffing me with having “bounced” the League through. He was never one of its warmest supporters.

The Covenant emerged from the Committee little altered from the draft settled by Sir Cecil Hurst and the American lawyer—David Hunter Miller—after various incidents recorded elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> In this form it was presented to the Plenary Conference on February 14th by the President in a speech in which he emphasised that it was a “living thing” which must be allowed to grow. I followed in the same sense. Further consideration of it was then adjourned to enable the President to visit America and, among other things, to smooth opposition there. In this his efforts were unsuccessful, and when he returned he appeared averse from any attempt to convert political critics. He was by nature impatient of opposition, and if it occurred his only idea seemed to be to beat it down. The staff he brought with him to Paris originally exemplified this characteristic. There was no influential Republican, for my old friend, Harry White, who had been one of the American Embassy in London, though techni-

<sup>1</sup> *A Great Experiment*, pp. 65 *et seq.*

ally a Republican, actually took no part in politics. And, as I have recorded,<sup>1</sup> when the President returned to Paris after his visit to America he was very reluctant to make any change in the Covenant if it had been advocated by a Senator! The natural result followed. When the document was brought before the Senate the majority necessary for its adoption could not be obtained, and the United States remained outside the League, with the disastrous consequences we have seen.

It was very unfortunate, because in many ways the international situation was then more propitious for a world effort for peace than it has ever been since. Though the bitterness was even then great, it was not comparable to that which existed at the end of the Second World War and still exists. There had been ill treatment of prisoners of war, especially French and Russians, but nothing like the organised torture and slaughter of millions of unarmed men, women and children which was perpetrated by the orders of the German High Command in this last war. A single example will show the difference of the moral atmosphere in this respect of the two wars. Towards the close of the First World War a German order was found directing the collection of "carcasses" on the battlefield so that the fat should be boiled down into lubricants. I remember the order being shown me at the Foreign Office, and I was told that the German word for carcasses might mean corpses. I asked for expert opinion on this point, and it was not clear, three authorities saying it meant horses and three that it included human beings. In the circumstances I did not forbid, as I ought to have done, the suggestion in our propaganda that the Germans were using human fat for the manufacture of lubricants. This suggestion caused horror here and indignation in Germany, and it was formally withdrawn by Austen Chamberlain when he was Foreign Secretary. Yet it was a venial charge compared to the incredible atrocities clearly proved at Nuremberg to have been perpetrated by Germans in this last war.

Nor was there any division amongst the victorious Allied and Associated Powers, as they were then called, which made co-operation for peace difficult. The old lines of Europe still remained. The old assumptions about international conduct were still valid. France and England may be said to have played the parts recently enacted by Russia and the United States. Between them they commanded the land and the sea, and both were willing to put their whole strength at the service of Peace. If only the United States had been willing then to join the League, how much suffering and destruction might have been saved!

I do not doubt that it was because President Wilson appreciated this position that he was so uncompromising in his attitude to those who, for

<sup>1</sup> *A Great Experiment*, pp. 82-83.

political party advantage, destroyed his peace policy. I remember when I visited the United States some years later I met at dinner a well known lady who rejoiced over the defeat of "Wilson's League" and the part she had played in bringing it about. I have never felt it more difficult than on that occasion to preserve the courtesies of social life.

No doubt a more conciliatory attitude by the President might have answered better, and perhaps it was the quarrel between him and Colonel House that made success impossible. For House had the very qualities needed for the situation. He was almost the antithesis of Wilson. He had no official position, and apparently no ambition for one. He sought neither office nor reward. I doubt if he ever made a speech. In conversation he was persuasive because he was always moderate and cared nothing for dialectical success. His whole mind and energy were concentrated on building up the structure of world peace and, if that required concessions, he was ready to make them. What the two quarrelled about I do not know. At Paris they were still working together. But, whatever was the cause, the quarrel was a disaster to world peace.

I have said elsewhere that not much change was made by the Paris Commission in the Anglo-American draft presented to them. But there was one important alteration. In our draft we provided an official called a "Chancellor" to be the head of the new international civil service. The idea was that he should be rather more than what we know as a permanent official. He was to be the international representative of the League—its mouthpiece—and the suggester, if not the director, of its policy. He would have been at least as influential on the political side as Albert Thomas, the Director of the I.L.O., was in industrial matters. To fill this post it would have been necessary to have had a statesman of European reputation, and we fixed on Venizelos as the man we wanted. Very soon after I arrived in Paris he came to dinner with me, and I found him "full of enthusiasm for the League" and talking with great energy on the subject. "He was ready for almost any proposal that the British Government should make in that connection," and returned several times to the subject, being "apparently very anxious to impress me with his genuine interest in it". However, when the first draft of the Covenant was complete, I asked whether Venizelos would accept the Chancellorship, and was told he certainly would not.

Had he done so it would have added immensely to the prestige of the new body and might, I think, have given it just the increased authority which would have prevented the politicians and the bureaucracies from destroying it. For Venizelos was a very remarkable man. I remember some months later dining with my friends the Noel-Bakers to meet him, when he gave a description of how he established his position in Greece.

He said that, after a military revolution in Greece some ten years earlier, he had very reluctantly taken charge of the revolutionary movement. As a first step, a Revisionist Assembly was elected—he himself being returned for Athens with an enormous majority. He was actually out of the country at the moment, and when he returned he was received with immense enthusiasm. Meanwhile public opinion had advanced, and instead of being a Revisionist Assembly there was a demand that it should be Constituent—that is to say that, instead of the system of Government being amended, it should be entirely reconstituted, including the abolition of the Monarchy. To this Venizelos was opposed, and when he came to address the people he began by referring to the Assembly as “Revisionist”. Whereupon there were loud cries of “Constituent”. He waited till they were quiet, and then repeated the word “Revisionist”. Again there was loud interruption, but he stood his ground, and eventually they gave him a hearing and he converted them to his views. It was his firmness on this occasion and his readiness, if necessary, to sacrifice his whole position rather than abandon the policy he thought necessary which gave him what was something like absolute power. The dramatic force with which he described the scene was very impressive. However, he would not be Chancellor, feeling that he was more urgently needed in his own country. That being so, and there being no other Chancellor available, we modified the position and title of the head of the Secretariat, describing him as Secretary-General. It was left to me to propose a suitable person for the position and, after Hankey had chosen to remain Secretary of the British Cabinet, I was extremely lucky in persuading Sir Eric Drummond, as he then was, to take it. He proved to be, as I have said elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> an admirable appointment. He held it till 1933, when he resigned, and was succeeded by the obvious French candidate, Monsieur Joseph Avenol. Unhappily, he was wholly unsuited to the job. Even before the Second World War broke out he was evidently out of his element, and during the war years he became quite impossible. It may be truly said that until Drummond resigned, the League, though a good deal battered, was still alive. The American Government had steadily moved nearer to co-operation with it, and the Russian delegate, Monsieur Litvinoff, had shown himself a very useful colleague. The French, under the leadership of Monsieur Blum, might still have been weaned from Laval and, with a British Minister of the energy and international vision of a Churchill, the position might have been saved.

But in 1919 this was all in the hidden future. I see in a contemporary document that at a dinner given in January, 1922, to which a number of distinguished French and English came, my impression was that the

<sup>1</sup> *A Great Experiment.*

French obviously disbelieved in the League, "except so far as it was a cloak for a perpetuation of the alliance between France and England to dominate the world". If one substitutes Russia for France, there is an awkward resemblance between the position then and now.

To offset this non-League atmosphere in Paris there was, I believe, a very pro-League majority among the common people in Europe. Certainly that was so in Great Britain. America was still dominated by disapproval of the wickedness of Europe and a fantastic belief in the cleverness of European statesmen. But all this mattered little for the time being. The Conference was directed by three men—Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George. Wilson's championship of the League, though perhaps not always tactful, was never failing. Clemenceau's opinion may be described as benevolent neutrality towards it and it never varied. But as President of the Conference he was determined that no one should say that the League had been smothered there. Accordingly he fell heavily on any hostile or contemptuous suggestion, even if it came from his Foreign Minister. Thus, when his Foreign Minister, Pichon, at the last moment, proposed that Monaco should be a member of the League, "the Tiger" fiercely refused to put any such suggestion to the Conference. Similarly, though he allowed Bourgeois to explain his proposal—which now seems reasonable—to create some kind of military force for the League, he prevented any real discussion of it. His Presidential methods were efficient but not conciliatory. After a minimum of discussion on almost any proposition the debate was closed with the word "*Adopte*", emphasised by a stroke of the hammer. He was not loved by his parliamentary colleagues. I said once at a dinner at which Albert Thomas, a Socialist Deputy and Director of the I.L.O., was present that I was fond of Clemenceau. To which Thomas replied concisely, "*Moi! Non!*" At the Conference Clemenceau's whole policy was to get as much as he could for France, for he was a very genuine patriot according to his own lights. He therefore at the beginning of the Conference supported all British proposals for annexations and then insisted on French claims to an improved frontier. But he did not go all the way with his military advisors. The result was that his authority did not last long into peace. In fact, when he stood for the Presidency of the Republic he was defeated, and retired to a little house at Passy where he died in 1929.

Let me quote from a broadcast<sup>1</sup> I made at his death:

"Clemenceau was born in 1841. His first introduction to public life was in the early sixties during the most corrupt and inefficient period of the Second Empire, against which he fought with all the vehemence of his nature. Before he was thirty he was the witness of

<sup>1</sup> By permission of the B.B.C.

the complete defeat and invasion of his country brought about by the infamy and ineptitude of the Imperial Government. These experiences governed his whole career. The object for which he lived was the restoration of his country and the reversal of the wrongs she had suffered. Patriotism became to him a passion. It took the place of religion and provided that idealism without which great characters cannot live.

“And so for more than forty years he strove by voice and pen to fortify his country for a renewal of the struggle with Germany, to cleanse it of corruption, to give it greater strength and a higher courage. Perhaps his outlook was too material. Perhaps he cared too much for his country’s glory and too little for her real happiness. But it is not for us, with our sheltered history, to judge him.

“It is probable that no man who has not seen his country invaded by hostile armies can ever quite understand the feelings of those who have been through that terrible ordeal. It was Clemenceau’s fate to see this happen twice. No wonder it made him ruthless and even bitter. To him, after 1870, the one thing that mattered was to make another invasion of France impossible and when he saw Deputies and Senators engaged in the ordinary intrigues and trickery and injustice of second-rate politics he did not restrain his indignation. He became the scourge of all those—and they were many—who were in politics for what they could get out of them. And this constantly renewed contest made him cynical. He almost ceased to believe in human virtue. That was the foundation of his attitude to such things as the League of Nations. They seemed to him too good to be true; what Napoleon called ideology. Often when I have visited him he has begun the conversation by saying: ‘I like the League of Nations,’ and then, with an ironic challenge: ‘but I don’t believe in it.’ But that did not prevent him from being very kind to me personally. He was called fierce and pitiless and he may have been so. When I saw him he was courtesy and consideration personified. He never made phrases. He said what he wanted to say in the plainest and most pointed language he could command—and sometimes it was *very* plain and pointed. He never talked for the sake of talking—only because he had got something to say. His oratory was not emotional. It was destructive, especially of falsity and pretence. His critical power was great. He used it to destroy mercilessly whatever he despised and he despised a good many things and people. Ministers fell before his tongue like corn before a sickle. It often happens that people of that kind are of little constructive value. It was not so with Clemenceau. His first Ministry

in 1906-09 was very successful. So, of course, was his second, which brought victory to France. In truth his intellectual force was very great. What he saw, he saw clearly, without ambiguity or self-delusion. It was characteristic of his mind that he did not want the Rhine frontiers for France. He knew that to include within her borders a large German population would weaken and not strengthen her. He was determined not to commit the same blunder that the Germans made in 1870 when they annexed Alsace and Lorraine. It was equally characteristic that, when he had decided against the Rhine frontier, he overbore all who advocated it, even though they included Foch, a Marshal of France and the leader of the victorious armies of the Allies.

“He lived a life of great simplicity in a small house in a respectable rather than a fashionable part of Paris. The room where he received visitors had no trace of luxury—barely furnished except for his celebrated horse-shoe table. The walls were lined with books shelves, filled with a mass of books—English as well as French—untidily thrown together. And there he would discourse on world politics and other topics. I saw him last at the end of May of 1929. He had aged a good deal but his mind was as clear as ever. He spoke sadly and with disillusionment. He professed that he no longer much cared to live, though he was very glad to have been alive. He spoke with uneasiness of the general situation in the world and especially in France. He seemed to think there was a decay of authority and—though he did not use the word—of ideals. He said: ‘The truth is that I am in one respect a very unfortunate man. I have seen my wishes fulfilled. I believed very much in democracy and representative Government and now that I see it in operation I am a little disappointed.’ One other striking phrase he employed. He said: ‘I have come to think that it is more difficult to make Peace than to make War—and requires more patience!’

“He was not a popular man. He had made too many enemies and his tongue was too sharp. But his fellow-countrymen deeply respected and admired him. He lived a most abstemious life, normally going to bed at nine and rising at five, and in consequence saw very little society. But a little while ago an American friend persuaded him to go to the Theatre. They went to a box and Clemenceau was immediately recognised. The play stopped and the audience rose while the band played the old soldiers’ songs—“Madelon” and the rest. That was a striking tribute and a just one. For France owed much to Clemenceau. His love for her was the ruling principle of his life. To her he sacrificed ease and friendship and perhaps even happiness.

He hated those whom he regarded as her enemies, whether at home or abroad, and he was merciless to them—a Tiger indeed. He grieved with her in defeat, he sought to discipline her in peace, he strengthened her in war and he led her to Victory."

In terms he rejected Christianity, saying to me: "Christ preached unity; you cannot deny that!—and look at the world now!" But I noticed on the shelves of his study a good number of religious books.

He certainly had great force of character and a kind of nobility which was very attractive. Near the end of the Conference he said to me that he would like to get out of politics and retire to a little house he had in Normandy, surrounded by rivers and where he would find trees and flowers and two or three dogs, of which he was very fond. That is a picture of the man not easy to reconcile with the bitter politician, the ruthless destroyer of Ministeries, denouncing Lloyd George and saying of his own Finance Minister that he was the only Jew in Paris who did not understand finance! In a way he got on quite well with Lloyd George. They amused one another. I remember his giving me an account of a meeting of the chief Ministers during the war at which some question of the use of the Allied ships arose and a proposal was made that a warship belonging to the Italians should sail from the harbour in which it was. Whereupon an Italian Admiral who was present vehemently protested, saying that when a ship left harbour all sorts of dangers surrounded it. "And then", said Clemenceau, "Lloyd George laughed and laughed. I never saw anyone laugh so much!" But the ship did not sail!

Lloyd George, the third member of the triumvirate, officially supported the League. As I have said, he moved the resolution by which the creation of the League was put on the agenda of the Conference. But he regarded it as of secondary importance, his attitude towards it being dependent on the progress of the Conference in other respects. The only controversy that I had with him on the subject arose from this position. A dispute arose between the British and American Admiralties as to some warship-building projected by the Americans which our naval chiefs thought would threaten our superiority at sea. Thereupon Lloyd George began to express doubt about the necessity of proceeding with the League. I protested strongly, and eventually some compromise was arranged which put an end to this particular difficulty. But the incident illustrates the kind of way in which he regarded the League, and gave him a certain air of vacillation on the subject. After the war was over and we had left Paris I remember asking Fisher, then in the Government and often one of our representatives at Geneva, what the Prime Minister (as he was then) really thought about the League, and all I could get out of him was that Lloyd

George was like the sea, sometimes blue and sometimes green. Lord Riddell says<sup>1</sup> that Lloyd George hated the League. I think that is an exaggeration, though it may have been an accurate report of some casual observation in that sense. It is doubtless the case that the idea that war could be abolished seemed to him fantastic. "What had been would be" was to him a fundamental truth. He could never be persuaded to visit Geneva. He rarely referred to the League in his public speeches, and when he did his approval of it was chilly.

So that in the highest levels of the Conference opinion the League could only absolutely depend on President Wilson. It is true that lower down the League was much more popular. Indeed, the working class, then and afterwards, in the British Commonwealth and, I believe, all over the world, were ardently in favour of peace and convinced that it could only be secured by international means. But at Paris the atmosphere was not favourable. I do not know whether it would be right to describe it as "materialistic". But certainly idealism was at a discount. This was evident not only with respect to the League. Generally there was a kind of restless and sceptical nationalism which showed itself most strikingly by xenophobia, the chief objects of which being the Americans. The President was continually attacked in the Paris Press. All sorts of stories were current of the misbehaviour of American troops, and part of the hostility to the League was due to what was inaccurately believed to be its American origin. But this nationalism did not bring with it any great access of patriotic belief in France. My impression at the time was that no one in Paris doubted that all—or almost all—politicians were simply out for what they could get. Apart from Clemenceau, there did not seem any considerable political leaders. Briand was there, but played little part in the Conference. Deschanel, who was, I think, then President of the Chamber, talked to me about the leading parliamentary speakers. He put Clemenceau and Briand first. Clemenceau he said had success because he was entirely new; instead of the rather florid style of the orators of 1848, he was very crisp and definite and astonishingly quick and effective in reply to any interruption. Briand was remarkable as the greatest improvisor. He never had any notes or, indeed, knew exactly what he was going to say when he began his speech. But he could follow his audience with extraordinary skill and always say what they wanted to hear. Later I heard Briand at the League, and I think Deschanel saw only one side of his oratory. When Briand was in earnest, as he was for peace, he was very persuasive. Of Ribot and Freycinet—both old men—Deschanel also spoke highly. But he did not think much of Viviani, whom other French judges would have put first of all. I believe Deschanel himself was a

<sup>1</sup> *Lord Riddell's Diary.*

polished speaker. I remember hearing him praised by some of his French colleagues for a great "gesture" he had made on some parliamentary occasion!

But, of all these men, none, with the solitary exception of Clemenceau, was capable of restoring the public spirit and energy of their country. A good deal has been said of the international intrigues surrounding the Conference. I did not see much of that. Nor did I come across any outstanding example of vice or wickedness. But I should say that in their talk and their actions, even down to such trivial matters as their fashion in dress, there was in the Parisians I met an almost complete lack of that iron determination which would enable them to deal with any grave crises in the future. Had we been prophets, the collapse of the Second World War would not have taken us by surprise. I do not believe that anything short of a great religious revival will set them solidly upon their feet.

At the end of April the treaty between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany was signed at Versailles, whence it got its name. It has been much criticised but, as far as its territorial provisions go, I think with little justice. Its financial provisions certainly were less defensible. It is unnecessary to go into them here beyond saying that after more than one modification in subsequent years, the attempt to get further indemnities from Germany was abandoned. Far worse than the excessive payments imposed on Germany in consequence of the Treaty was the method by which that was done. The English speeches at the Election of 1918 insisted on two things. The first was that the Kaiser should be tried, which the Dutch Government prevented by refusing to expel him from Holland. The second was that Germany should pay the whole cost of the war, which was impracticable because the only possible way in which she could raise anything like the sum required was by an increase of her exports, which would have been disastrous to our trade. Had the treaty been settled by negotiation between the belligerents this difficulty would have been made clear and more reasonable financial terms would have been agreed. Instead of that, the terms were, as the Germans have never ceased to insist, dictated. They could not be enforced, and with their failure went other portions of the treaty, like disarmament, which ought to have been maintained.

The economic problems were not new in 1919. Months before the treaty was signed an economic committee was brought into existence to discuss them, and with some reluctance—which I shared—Lloyd George agreed to a proposal during the Paris Conference that I should be its Chairman. I do not think it did any good. But it brought me into close relations with some of the technical advisers of President Wilson. One was Thomas Lamont, who, I am glad to say, with his wife, became a great personal friend whose generous hospitality my wife and I have since

enjoyed more than once in New York.<sup>1</sup> Another was Bernard Baruch—a most interesting man. He is, I am glad to say, still doing important work in the States. I remember at an early stage in our acquaintance he asked me to dine with him at the Ritz. He then told me that he had been examined before a Congressional Committee on some financial controversy, and that one of the Committee had begun his examination by asking what he was. It was expected by his critics that he would say he was a banker. But he took the wind out of their sails by calmly replying that he was a speculator!

I have said that I do not propose to discuss the terms of the Covenant of the League, since I have done that so fully in *A Great Experiment*. But having now seen the Charter of San Francisco and watched its working, I can truly say that it would have been, in my opinion, a better plan, had it been possible, to have amended and confirmed the Covenant rather than to have started a new document. In the twenty years of its existence the League's defects and its merits had become known. The style of its drafting was not so eloquent as that of the Charter. But I am not sure that that made it less practical. Even the want of "teeth" with which it was reproached was not so serious a defect as is sometimes alleged, since such "teeth" as it had were never fully used. From its birth it had to fight against the indifference or hostility of the official bureaucracies. Generally speaking, there was little public support for it outside Great Britain. Indeed, the conception of organising public opinion in favour of peace through the League did not appear to exist except in the English-speaking countries. The result was that, though excellent work was done at Geneva in non-political matters, and even in assuaging quarrels between minor Powers, yet the League had not sufficient strength to stop Japanese aggression in the Far East in 1932–33 or Italian attacks on Abyssinia in 1935. And when German plans for the subjugation of freedom in Europe matured, the League had become powerless.

I had been returned in the so-called "Coupon" Election as a recognised supporter of the Lloyd George Government. When we came back from Paris, the Treaty of Versailles was presented to and accepted by Parliament. The Prime Minister described it in his speech, but noticeably said little about the League. On the other hand, the League of Nations Union held a great meeting in the Albert Hall, at which Grey was in the chair and I was one of the speakers. It was perhaps a symptom of the way in which the League was regarded by certain sections of opinion here that my speech was interrupted by a man in the gallery, who said, through a megaphone: "Robert Cecil, you are a bloody traitor!" His observation was not received with any favour, and he was without difficulty removed. But

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written Thomas Lamont has died and the world has lost a great citizen.

some twenty-eight years later, an invitation to me to speak at a meeting in Wiltshire about the Second World War had to be cancelled because certain "patriots" would not be seen on the same platform as myself. There have always been, I am glad to say, a considerable body of Conservatives who have supported the League. But it was from the Liberals and the mass of the Labour Party that came its most convinced adherents. I mention this now because almost immediately after my return from the Peace Conference I became aware of the difficulty of my position in the Conservative Party.

There was at the time considerable subterranean political unrest in the country. During the summer of that year—1919—I went down to my constituency and arranged to have a number of informal talks with the agricultural labourers on politics. At one of the first of these talks with some men who were road-making I said something to the effect that they were no doubt opposed to revolution. Whereupon a very nice young fellow replied with perfect good temper: "Oh! I don't know about that!" The truth seemed to me to be that until the First World War there was a fairly general opinion that foreign affairs, including particularly questions of peace and war, had better be left in the hands of the old governing classes. That kind of opinion, therefore, had a great shock when we had to go through the destruction and disaster of the First World War. I believe myself that it was largely due to the hope that the League would preserve them from a repetition of the catastrophe that induced the people to give the old system another chance. It is certainly true that as late as 1935 eleven millions of them voted in the so-called Peace Ballot in support of the League. It was the Second World War which persuaded them that, since the League had been allowed to fail, nothing but a political root-and-branch change would give any chance of security for the future.

Another thing brought home to me by this tour of North Herts was that the farmers were usually very unpopular with their labourers. At one gathering of my constituents I said: "Of course there are good employers and bad employers", whereupon I was met by a general interruption, "Not here! They're all bad!" On another occasion a labourer in the fields said to me, "In the old days, when wages were twelve or fifteen shillings a week, we were told that agriculture could not stand more. Now the wages are double what they were then, and farming still pays."

As I have before said,<sup>1</sup> I had been for years an advocate of co-partnership in industry, and I tried to get the farmers to adopt its principles in their business. The suggestion was not very cordially received. But two or three of them made some attempts in that direction. Unfortunately it was those who had been unsuccessful under the old system who were ready

<sup>1</sup> See p. 58 *et seq.*, and p. 221.

to try something new, and the results were not very encouraging during the few years in which I was able to watch them as a Member of the House of Commons.

I remember shortly after my return from Paris speaking on the same platform as J. R. Clynes in favour of co-partnership and saying that I thought great changes in the organisation of industry—amounting to revolution—were inevitable. In fact, there were many strikes and considerable unrest for some years. But nothing was done to make things better, for the political machine was out of gear. The Government that made the peace was a Coalition of Liberals and Conservatives under Lloyd George and Bonar Law. The Liberal Party was hopelessly split between the followers of Asquith and those of Lloyd George, so that the greater part of the Ministerial majority were Conservatives, led by one who had been, as a Radical, one of their most bitter enemies. Ireland was deeply disturbed; agrarian crime of the usual horrible description on one side and brutal forms of coercion on the other. Indeed, there are few chapters of the history of our Government in Ireland more utterly deplorable than our failure to stop the organised campaign of murder and outrage perpetrated in the name of Irish Nationalism, followed by letting loose a specially recruited division of the Irish Constabulary, known as the Black and Tans, to take reprisals for such crimes by burning the villages and cities of Southern Ireland. I was profoundly shocked at the whole proceeding, and repeatedly said so from my place in Parliament. To me there was an added repugnance for such horrors in the fact that they occurred at the very time we were trying to set up at Geneva a system of world peace. When, after some months, the Government decided to surrender to the Irish Republic, much as I disliked it, I felt unable to vote against it. Accordingly a “treaty” was made by which Southern Ireland was handed over to De Valera and his friends, while the six Northern Counties remained part of the United Kingdom. It was a bad thing badly done and has, I doubt not, encouraged nationalist movements of a similar character in other countries.

On my return to London in 1919 I took my seat in the House of Commons on the Ministerial side and gave a general support to the Government. As I have explained, the Bill for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church in Wales had been held in suspense during the war. While we were in Paris I mentioned it to Lloyd George, and he immediately said that he expected Bonar Law to deal with that. That was not Bonar’s view and, indeed, it would have been very repellent for a Conservative leader to make himself personally responsible for such a measure. So the matter stood over till the Prime Minister came back. When the Bill came on I made such parliamentary resistance as seemed

practicable, which was not much, especially as the Welsh Churchmen thought the financial terms offered were, in the circumstances, reasonable. The Prime Minister was anxious to be conciliatory, and asked me whether there was any modification of Disendowment which would satisfy me. I felt bound to say that I was against Disendowment on principle, and that it was not a question of figures. A little later on Austen Chamberlain also suggested that I might rejoin the Government. But I preferred to keep myself free for the time being. Then an incident occurred which made office out of the question.

The Liberal Member for Paisley died, and Asquith, who was out of Parliament, was invited to stand as a Liberal against a Labour candidate and a Coalitionist. It was a tough fight, and I was asked by one of his relatives to write a public letter on his behalf. It was said that there was no chance for the Coalitionist, and that the real contest was between Asquith and Labour. I felt doubtful what I ought to do. I was not politically a follower of Asquith. On the other hand, he was a very distinguished Parliamentarian, who, on national grounds, ought to be in the House of Commons. Then I had always felt disturbed at the course of events in 1916, when he was replaced by Lloyd George and I had decided to remain in office. While I served under Grey and Asquith, both of them had been extremely helpful to me. I found Asquith an almost perfect ministerial chief and, in spite of his defects as a war leader, I felt that a good many of the criticisms of him were unjust. So that it was very attractive to me to do something which would show that I was not wholly ungrateful. Accordingly I wrote the letter, and I believe it had some influence in securing his return. But of course from the Party point of view it was thought an outrageous proceeding.

That was in the end of 1919. It was the beginning of the worst period in Ireland, which went on getting still worse till it culminated in the burning down of a part of Cork by the Black and Tans in answer to the murder of some of their fellows. Nor was I at all satisfied about industry, with the repeated strikes, particularly in the coal mines, coupled with demands for nationalisation. I was therefore politically unhappy, and began to wonder whether an alternative Coalition under such a man as Grey would be possible. I talked to several people about it, including Grey himself. I even went so far as to write a letter to the very influential Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*—C. P. Scott—of which the following are extracts:

27th August, 1921.

“DEAR MR. SCOTT,

“I venture to write to you about the forthcoming speech by Lord Grey at Berwick on October 10th. . . .

"The re-entry of Grey into the political world is of great importance. He embodies more than any other living man the spirit which should direct our policy. And I am satisfied that if only he can be presented to the country in this light he will have a great following. If, on the other hand, he is to be backed merely as a distinguished Liberal politician resuming his place in the Party machine, he will lose half his value. . . . If Grey can be presented as a *super-Party rallying point* for the electors, much may be done. If he is regarded by them just as a rather superior Party politician, they will take little interest in him and may even be driven back to their old Party associations. . . ."

Looking back on the proposal, it seems almost absurd, and it is only worth recalling as an indication of what I then felt about the position. It early became clear that Grey was not personally attracted by the suggestion, and in any case would do nothing about it without the full concurrence of Asquith, which was never obtained. So it fell to the ground.

Grey was a difficult man to persuade. He told me once that he liked A. B., but that he had one defect—"He comes to me with some proposal. As he states it, it seems to me plausible. Then he repeats it and I am less attracted. He then presses it again and I am definitely antagonised." So it was, I am afraid, with my efforts to persuade him to come out of his virtual retirement. The more I urged it the less he liked it, and eventually I and others had to abandon the plan. Yet, looking back, I still regret that it failed. Grey had qualities so essential to our well-being, particularly in the after-war years, that the dream of a Centre Party led by him was one which still delights me.

Meanwhile in the summer of 1920 I received an invitation from Smuts, then Prime Minister of South Africa, to go to Geneva as one of the delegates of that Dominion. I accepted with great pleasure, the more so because an offer to pay the expenses of myself and my wife was included. Accordingly, I attended the Assembly of 1920 and the following two years in that capacity. The first delegate was the Agent-General for the Dominion, and Gilbert Murray was the third. I had got to know him very well as Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee of the League of Nations Union. He was a most delightful colleague, charming as a companion and invaluable as an assistant. I can say with truth that I never enjoyed anything more in my life than my work as South African delegate to the League of Nations.

Without attempting any detailed history of the League, there are some general considerations which are relevant to the subject of this

book. This was the first attempt to set up definite international machinery to secure peace. There had been, as is pointed out in the report of the Phillimore Committee of 1918, many proposals that something of the kind should be done. In that sense the framers of the Covenant were not breaking new ground. The general idea that the nations should combine to prevent war was old. But, with the partial exception of the so-called Holy Alliance after the Napoleonic Wars there had been no attempt to carry out this idea by appropriate machinery. Even the Holy Alliance did little more than make a declaration of international principles. It was because Castlereagh regarded such generalities as futile that he declined to join the Alliance and preferred his system of international conferences without any rules or regulations. That plan came to an end in five of six years as far as England was concerned, and it was followed by various partial attempts at international co-operation like the Concert of Europe. In setting up at Paris the League, the first thing was to settle its constitution, to fix its membership and provide for an Assembly and a Council, a Secretariat and a Court of Justice. This was quickly agreed upon, and never gave any serious trouble. It has been reproduced in substance by the Charter of the United Nations. Then came the chief difficulty. What was to be the duty and the power of this machine? It was felt that the conception of national sovereignty or independence would be the great obstacle, as it is still. Would the nations consent to the creation of an international authority superior to any one of them? A mass of patriotic sentiment and tradition was against it. Anything in the nature of a super-state or a federal union seemed impossible. The question therefore appeared to be: "What is the least interference with national sovereignty which will be effective to secure peace?" That was the governing consideration in determining the powers to be given to the League. Even so, the United States refused to join on the express ground that her sovereignty would be too much curtailed.

Let me say a word about sovereignty. The word is used in these discussions to mean the bundle of rights belonging to an independent State. Many of them are of minor importance, and are frequently modified or abandoned in treaties made between two or more countries. Extradition Treaties, Treaties of Commerce, Arbitration Treaties and many others are all restrictions of rights which Sovereign States would otherwise possess. But when it comes to the right of going to war we are on much more difficult ground. A State which abandons its right of self-defence can scarcely be regarded as independent, and any limitation of its right to fight may become a step in that direction. Yet without some limitation of that kind any effort to establish an international system of world peace is futile. That, then, was the problem which we tried to solve

at Paris. In approaching it we were very much influenced by the events which had preceded the First World War.

It will be remembered that after the murders at Serajevo, Grey did his best to prevent the quarrel between Serbia and Austria degenerating into war. He failed, no doubt because the Austro-Hungarian Government had determined on war. But to spectators it looked as though peace might have been saved if only the two Governments could have been induced to submit their grievances to a Conference of European Powers. It was recollection of those hopes which suggested a possible solution. Let the members of the new League agree that if any international dispute occurs, none of the parties to it shall "resort to war" until there shall have been a full examination of it and a delay of some months. Their right to fight would not be abolished, it would be delayed. During that time every means was to be used by negotiation, arbitration or conference to reach a peaceful settlement. If a definite recommendation was thereby secured and one of the parties acted on it, then the other party would be forbidden to resort to war. But if there was no clear decision on the questions submitted, then each party would be left to take what course it thought best. Evidently for such a plan to have any chance of success the agreed delay was essential. To attack during that period would be a clear breach of the Covenant of the League, and all members of the League were bound to use all measures of coercion—diplomatic, political and, if necessary, military—to resist and defeat such aggression. That was the central requirement of the League, and it was never fully tried; for aggressive States cannot afford delay. It turned out that in all the cases in which the League actually intervened it had to do so because one State attacked another without any pause for inquiries or negotiation. Where only Minor Powers were concerned the intervention was successful, because in dealing with them the League's authority was overwhelming. But when a Great Power was involved the case was different. When Japan attacked China, or Italy attacked Ethiopia, or Germany ran amok in Central Europe, then nothing but complete solidarity of the other members of the League could have saved peace. Why that solidarity was not attained is a matter of history, and I have given my detailed version of it in *A Great Experiment*. It is enough here to say that it was the want of foresight and determination by the peace-loving Powers, coupled with the carefully planned undermining of the League by Germany and her associates, that caused the catastrophe. It must not be supposed that the framers of the Covenant overlooked these dangers. We knew at Paris in 1919 that after every period of great wars efforts had been made to secure future peace, as is set out in the Phillimore Report, and that they had all failed. Now, for the first time, we were going to try to build up a world combination, with specific obligations on its mem-

bers and machinery to enable them to carry those obligations into effect. By Articles 10 and 11 of the Covenant the general duty to preserve and enforce peace was declared, and there followed the various steps which were to be taken to prevent war. But we did not rely solely on machinery of this kind. The duty of international co-operation for social and economic purposes was also laid down. Indeed, in the preamble this duty comes first. In essence all that is contained on international co-operation in the Charter of San Francisco is to be found in the Covenant, though not so elaborately stated. With the same object of lessening the tendency to war, the general reduction and limitation of armaments is provided for. Nor were these Articles of the Covenant mere aspirations. On the contrary, an immense amount of work was done to bring the nations closer together and to show them by actual results how greatly their moral and material welfare could be increased by international collaboration. It is true that this part of the League's work did not make much appeal to the ordinary reader of newspapers. That was not the fault of the Press, since it is its business to give its readers what they want. Nor was the League itself to blame in the matter. Everything that could be done by full publicity of its proceedings was accomplished. Nor do I think that the Peace Organisations like the League of Nations Union can be fairly charged with neglecting this part of their work of publication. Certainly from the very start the League advocates in Britain held great public meetings all over the country to popularise the League, and used the newspapers and broadcasts as far as they were allowed to do so. Similar, though not such extensive, work was done in our Dominions, on the Continent, and even in America. On the other hand, we got very little help from the Governments in this country or elsewhere. I used constantly to urge Ministers here to give more open and definite support to the League. True, they sent Balfour as the chief British delegate to the Council and Assembly. In many ways he was admirable. He was genuinely keen for peace, and of course very able and persuasive. But he was not dynamic. His main object was to avoid friction and, though he was always personally charming to me, he regarded my activities with a good deal of misgiving.

Still, when all is said and done, the progress made by the League in its first ten years was remarkable. At the first Assembly it had no unity and very little belief in its mission. Speeches were made praising peace in rather florid language, but little was done until the question of assistance to Armenia came up. It was a question which raised no other national interests—an appeal for help from a small nation struggling against overwhelming odds. There was an instant response, as I have elsewhere described, and though, as events turned out, no international action was asked for, yet the Assembly thenceforward recognised that it had a duty to pre-

serve the peace of the world above and beyond the strictly national interests of any of its members.

That was the starting point of the Assembly, and it proceeded with its own constitutional organisation. It set going a number of Committees to deal with economic and social questions. It established the Permanent Court of Justice at The Hague, and it began its work of supervising the government by mandate of backward peoples in various parts of the world. Meanwhile the Council had met nine times in its first year and done a mass of what afterwards became routine work. It also settled a controversy between Sweden and Finland.

All this work continued with increasing volume and success for the next ten years. During the earlier part of the time Balfour and the French Senator—Bourgeois—were the most influential personalities at Geneva. Both were genuine supporters of the League, and neither of them was capable of exciting enthusiasm. Nor was there any sign at the outset that in England the Prime Minister (Lloyd George) or the Foreign Secretary (Lord Curzon) regarded the League as more than an interesting sideshow. Neither of them came to Geneva. They did not think it worth their while. That was also the view of Baldwin when he became Prime Minister. His attitude was made more emphatic by the fact that during Sessions of the Assembly he visited Annecy, close by. The only English Prime Minister who ever attended the League was Ramsay Macdonald in 1924 and in 1929. He came, but he misconceived the nature of the Assembly, and addressed the experienced international statesmen there assembled as if they were an English public meeting. Till Austen Chamberlain decided, after some hesitation, to attend personally a meeting of the Council at Rome in 1924, no British Foreign Minister as such had attended either Assembly or Council, and it was more or less of an accident when he did so. This is what happened. Balfour had become unavailable, and at first Chamberlain decided to send his Under-Secretary. When the Geneva Secretariat earnestly pressed for the presence of a Cabinet Minister, Chamberlain was almost forced to go himself. His only obvious Cabinet colleague for such work was myself, and he had already expressed his dislike of causing any ambiguity as to who was directing the foreign policy of the country by allowing me any share in it. Whatever the reason of his going, it was, as far as it went, a valuable move, both because it was a recognition of the importance of the League, and also because it convinced the Foreign Secretary himself that the work being done by it was worth while. Still, the whole incident shows the official attitude on the subject. It was certainly astonishing that the admirable public servants in the Foreign and Diplomatic Service, conscious as they must have been even then that a renewal of the World War was at least a possibility, failed

either to give whole-hearted support to the League or, if they could not do that, at least to try to set up some alternative method of preserving peace. It was not as though the League had shown no peace-keeping capacity. As early as 1921 it had settled the impending war between Serbia and Albania. It was then that Balfour declared: "No statesman, national organisation or machinery in the world could have done what the League has done in this matter". And again in the Corfu dispute the intervention of the League undoubtedly prevented the annexation of Corfu by Italy. It is true in the case of Corfu that owing to the action of the then Foreign Minister (Curzon) the chance was missed of a full assertion of international justice, which would have probably had the incidental result of putting an end to the growing Fascism of Italy under Mussolini.

In spite of these and other instances of the League's promise, it was impossible to convince certain sections of the official mind that the preservation of peace was not only, in the words of the old saying, "the greatest of British interests", but that it could be attained by the League, and by no other known machinery. So it happened that the critical test came over the invasion of China in 1931-37 by Japan and of Abyssinia in 1935 by Italy.<sup>1</sup> As far as China was concerned there was this difficulty. Of the three Great Powers most interested in China—namely, the United States, Russia and the British Commonwealth—only the last mentioned was a member of the League. Still, China and Japan were then both members, and China definitely asked for the League's intervention. The case came to Geneva at the time of the English Ministerial crisis, when Ramsay Macdonald broke up the then existing Labour Government and became Prime Minister of an Administration supported by the other side. Hence the British Delegation at Geneva was in a very uncertain position. I had been sent out at the last minute to lead it, and within a few days of my arrival the Japanese organised their aggression, screening it with a mass of falsehood. There followed a complicated set of negotiations and military actions, which ended in Japan occupying Manchuria, a northern province of China, as large, I believe, as France and Germany combined. I made various suggestions in the next few months for vigorous League action if we could get the support of the United States. Whether that could have been brought about is a matter of dispute. In any case, no serious attempt was made to stop Japan. It was said that our national interests were not seriously concerned in China. Perhaps not, but they were deeply concerned in preserving peace, and therefore in supporting the League with all our strength. The plain truth is that was not done. Indeed, that policy was never accepted by our inter-war Governments other than Labour. In the result, the Japanese aggression inflicted very

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 198 *et seq.*

grave injuries on China, not only in the North, but later on in the Centre as well. Many thousands of Chinese were killed and large parts of China were ravaged and occupied. The Japanese militarists seized the opportunity to instal themselves at Tokio. Naturally the League authority was very seriously shaken.

Then there was the even worse shock to the cause of peace over Abyssinia.<sup>1</sup> In that case another Axis Power—Italy—carefully organised an attack on Ethiopia without a vestige of justification. Abyssinia had been admitted as a member of the League, with the warm support of Italy, and she asked for League intervention. We encouraged her to rely on the League. Our Ministers made eloquent speeches about the importance of supporting the League, but ultimately failed to do so, again on the ground that we had no national interest in the independence of Abyssinia—Sir John Simon saying later on in 1935 “he was not prepared to risk a single ship to preserve Abyssinian independence”. That was the general policy of the inter-war British Governments. They were warned that persistence in it must end in the destruction of the League, which was the only safeguard of peace. It is not the first time in history that blind pacifism has led to war.

I have mentioned two crucial instances in which aggressive Powers were allowed to flout the League. Others could be added, as I have narrated elsewhere. Indeed, it became one of the favourite Ministerial slogans that the Government should have “no commitments”. This meant that they would not specifically bind the country to resist a particular act of aggression. It might or might not; each case must be judged when it arose. Any peace-breaker might therefore go on preparing for aggression, and even taking preliminary steps towards it, on the chance that we should prevent the League from moving. Such an attitude is much the same as if the criminal law refused to say what was meant by theft or murder until it had actually been committed. The very opposite is the proper peace policy. Make it as clear as words can that aggression is an international crime, and that wherever it takes place each peace-loving country will join with others to stop it. Had that been done firmly and decidedly in the years before the late war, I agree with Mr. Churchill that the war might never have taken place, and unless we and others continue to make resistance to aggression the foundation of our foreign policy we shall, before many years are over, be involved in a fresh and final struggle for existence.

It was the same thing with disarmament. The members of the League had bound themselves to carry out the general reduction and limitation of armaments, and for very good reason. If not, and each country is free

<sup>1</sup> For further details see p. 206.

to increase its armaments at will, it is evident that a "race in armaments" must develop. Experts in each country will view with deep suspicion each step to increase the war power of its neighbours and advise appropriate action to counterbalance such increase. If, as may well happen, public opinion is doubtful as to the necessity of the expenditure involved, a lurid picture will be drawn of the motives and power of all foreign Governments. We can see something of the kind already going on in Europe, after the Second World War, in spite of the fact that the chief Powers are still in alliance. In existing circumstances it is difficult to blame anyone. I, for one, have never felt able to advocate the unilateral disarmament of this country. On the contrary, I have always supported the Government of the day in any increase of armaments that they may consider necessary. But nevertheless no one can doubt that unrestricted competition is bound to produce the international jealousy which leads to war. The only way out is the negotiation of a treaty of general and parallel disarmament, and that was the policy recommended by the League of Nations Union, and myself, as its President.

As soon as the problem is practically tackled it will be found that two conditions are essential. There must be disarmament on agreed lines by all countries, with proper provision for international inspection and control, and there must be a trustworthy machine by which countries having honestly disarmed will be protected if lawless neighbours try to seize the opportunity to attack them.

By the Covenant, the League was directed to carry out a general scheme of reduction and limitation of armaments, and from its start the Assembly and its Committees set about that task. Naturally the militarists of all countries disliked that policy, and so did the very wealthy and powerful armament manufacturers. It is probable that they used some of their resources, and especially their publicity organisation, to defeat the policy. Indeed, I have always attributed no small part of the venom with which the Peace Ballot<sup>1</sup> was attacked to fear that its success might lead to a diminution of profits from the manufacture and sale of arms.

Generally our Government remained tolerably neutral on the question, though they allowed one of their most highly-placed officials to denounce the whole policy of disarmament. It may truly be said that, until shortly before the last World War broke out, the general course of our armaments preparation was stationary, or even downwards. It has been alleged that that was due to the action of the League of Nations Union. There is no ground for that suggestion, unless it be that some pacifists, without our consent, may have used our platforms to advance their views. We—and I speak for all the leaders of the League of Nations Union as well as myself

<sup>1</sup> See p. 171.

—never advocated unilateral disarmament by this country. On the contrary, when, much too late, the Government asked Parliament to sanction some increase of armaments to meet what all recognised to be the coming danger from Germany, and the matter was debated in the House of Lords in the spring of 1936,<sup>1</sup> I both spoke and voted for the Government proposal, merely asking for an assurance that the new armaments would be also available to support the Covenant of the League.

The truth is that in those years before the Second World War there were two policies possible. One was to use the whole power of the country—military as well as diplomatic—in support of the maintenance of peace by the League. That was what we urged. The other was to devote all our resources to build up our army, navy and air force to their utmost limit. Both policies might have been, indeed, pursued at the same time. But the Government did neither. I met Mr. Churchill just after the Peace Ballot. He was very cordial about its success, and congratulated me very much upon it. But he asked for an assurance from me that I would also support all necessary increase of armaments—an assurance which I gave him. Of course I did. The Covenant quite clearly contemplates and provides for the use of force in support of peace, and it was on that ground that pacifists like the late Lord Parmoor at first refused their support for the League. It was on the same ground that he and his Labour colleagues at first turned down the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance,<sup>2</sup> which at Geneva I had negotiated with the French Delegate, to define the procedure to be followed by the peace-loving countries if coercion of an aggressor became necessary.

Our opponents of the Right had got it into their minds that the League was just a piece of unpractical pacifism, while on the Left it was said by some extremists that we were war-mongers. In the House of Lords debates on these subjects I often had to defend the League against charges by Lord Ponsonby and Lord Arnold that it was too militarist, and against Lord Mansfield and his friends who regarded it as a piece of new-fangled pacifism. The Government in such debates confined itself to a refusal to say whether, and if so how far, it would support the League in a crisis, while a certain number of distinguished ex-diplomats advocated a return to the Treaty of Vienna and the Balance of Power. In the end the disastrous policy of appeasement was adopted, with all the consequences which the world has endured and is still enduring.

One more instance of the Government attitude towards the League may be given. The expenses of the League at Geneva amounted to something under £1,500,000 per annum. This was spread over the whole of the members in an agreed scale, which allotted to the United Kingdom one

<sup>1</sup> See p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> See later, p. 183.

tenth of that amount and to the whole British Commonwealth, including India, a quarter. To that must be added some relatively small amounts which each member of the League paid to its delegation for expenses. I do not think that anyone who considers the immense amount of social and economic work done by the League and its Committees will regard the sums mentioned as excessive even if that had been the whole of its activity. But of course it was not. Its main purpose was the preservation of peace. From that point of view the attitude of British Governments is instructive. If they believed the League was useful as a peace-keeping machine, the expenditure was trifling. The price of a single battleship would have paid for ever the cost of the League to the United Kingdom. Yet British representatives at Geneva were continually told to complain that the expenditure there was extravagant. The only explanation could be either that the British Government cared little about the preservation of peace, which was certainly not true, or that they had no real belief that the League was of any use for that purpose. That was, no doubt, the case, and if so it would have been far better for the British Government to have openly declared its opinion and abandoned the League. Half-hearted support was useless, as might have been expected. Indeed, it was worse than useless. It hampered the preparation for war without doing anything effective to guarantee peace.

The story of the Peace Ballot will show what I mean. By the end of 1934 it had become clear that the foreign policy of the country was no longer in any true sense based on the League. Every now and then, in King's Speeches or utterances of Ministers, some formal statement in support of the League was made. But that was only to quiet the uneasiness of a certain section of Government supporters. When urged to take really effective action, Ministers constantly alleged that the country would not support them in a more vigorous League policy. It was to remove this last impression that the ballot was started.<sup>1</sup> We thought that if we could show the official world that the electorate was in favour of the League, it would be easier for the Government to give it full support. Accordingly, we drew up some six questions dealing with membership of the League, general reduction of armaments by international agreement and international resistance to aggression, which were to be submitted to every adult inhabitant of the United Kingdom over eighteen years old. The questions were founded on the Covenant of the League, with the addition of one which raised the question of the manufacture of armaments for private profit. The result was an overwhelming vote of support for the League. On four questions the majority amounted to ninety per cent; on one of the two others it was eighty per cent and on the last one

<sup>1</sup> See also pp. 187 and 205.

seventy per cent. The result was presented to the Government in the summer of 1935, and the Prime Minister (Mr. Baldwin) spoke of it as of very great value.

A General Election was to take place in the autumn, and there were hopes that our Government would feel able to take a more vigorous line than it had done recently. The Abyssinian question was nearing its crisis. For upwards of a year it had been known in Rome that the Italian Government contemplated an attack on that country, and a series of frontier incidents were organised to justify it. Just before the Assembly met in September I was sent for by Mr. Eden at the Foreign Office. A number of other people were, I believe, also summoned. I was asked whether I would support the Government in a strong League policy, and of course I said I would do so. The Assembly met in September, and our Foreign Secretary—Sir Samuel Hoare—made a strong speech there in favour of collective action against aggression. This was followed by a hesitating application of commercial pressure against Italy. There is reason to believe that her Government was told by Laval, then the French Prime Minister, that no action which would lead to war would be taken against her. The commercial pressure took the form of a series of feeble and ineffective attempts at economic sanctions, supported generally by the members of the League, and accompanied by assurances from the British Government that they did not imply any hostility to Italy. A whispered defence was made for our inaction that our Fleet in the Mediterranean could not face a battle with the Italian ships there for want of ammunition!—a suggestion indignantly denied in private letters by the Admiral in Command. Meanwhile the General Election took place, and unquestionably the apparent vigour of the Government's policy at Geneva combined with other things to prevent their defeat at the polls. Having fulfilled its object, the policy was reversed, and the Hoare-Laval Agreement took its place, whereby the defence of the independence and integrity of Ethiopia was abandoned. A wave of indignation followed, which caused the resignation of the Foreign Minister. But a death-blow had been given to the authority of the League, from the results of which only very strong measures could have saved it. No such strong measures were taken. The economic sanctions petered out. Italy was left in possession of the territory she had seized, and in the summer of 1936 a British Minister declared that anyone who advocated sanctions under the Covenant was suffering from "midsummer madness". Within some three years of this speech, the Second World War had begun. The League therefore had failed in its chief object. True much had been done internationally for social and economic advance. The remnants of slavery had been almost stamped out; the prisoners of war scattered over Europe had been re-

stored to their countries; the opium evil had been brought under control; the White Slave traffic and licensed prostitution had been greatly diminished; many official hindrances to international intercourse had been lessened; through the International Labour Office something had been done to improve the conditions of European labour, and more might have been done if the British Government had made the best use of their opportunities. All this and more is true. But none of it prevented war, or even delayed its outbreak for a week. Ministers must have known that without peace there could be no lasting economic or social progress. Yet, in practice, they failed to draw the inescapable conclusion that no effort and no sacrifice was too great to secure peace. Of course I do not question that the men chiefly responsible were honourable and patriotic. Besides Bonar Law, who was only in power for a few months, most of which were spent by him in his fatal illness, there were four Prime Ministers during the inter-war years. First came Lloyd George—a man of immense strength of character. But, like Clemenceau, he only believed in force. To him the Covenant, with its provisions for the settlement of international disputes by pacific means in the first place, was unreal. Though he supported it as well-meaning and even attractive, yet he was not prepared while he was Prime Minister to subordinate all else to the replacement of war by law, for in his heart he did not think that could be done. In his closing years he seemed to move nearer to the League. But it was then too late. Baldwin, who succeeded him, was temperamentally much more convinced that war was hateful. In a way he was too pacific by nature. I remember his asking me whether I believed that the coercive powers in the Covenant were necessary. I think it was largely the influence of his dislike of military action that produced the Abyssinian fiasco. If Lloyd George believed too much in force, Baldwin believed in it too little. Neither criticism can, I think, be justly applied to Macdonald. He was indeed a great partisan of international negotiation. He liked it—I remember his once telling me so—and perhaps he believed that he did it very well. But he certainly showed no sign of thinking that the powers of the League were either too pacifist or too militarist. What he seemed to dislike about the League system was that it relied too much on general collaboration and too little on the initiative and energy of particular Governments—especially of the Government of which he was the leader. It was this attitude of mind which made him out of tune with the League Assembly and unwilling to discuss the foreign policy of the country with convinced supporters of the League. Though he repeatedly expressed his desire to talk on the subject with me, he never did so, not, I think, for any reasons of personal dislike, but rather because he felt a repulsion for the international thesis which it was my business to advocate.

Following these Premiers came Neville Chamberlain. He had originally, I believe, accepted the League, and would have liked it to succeed. But by the time he came into power nothing but a Herculean effort could have revived the situation. There was, indeed, just a chance if the proposal made by Litvinoff in the spring of 1938 had been taken up. But for a man with Neville Chamberlain's background to have plunged for a policy of co-operation with Russia was almost impossible. It was far more congenial for him to try for the "appeasement" of Germany and Italy, even if that did involve the abandonment of our obligations, first to Abyssinia and then to Czechoslovakia. After all, "British interests" were not involved in either country, and it was easy to believe, however mistakenly, that we were under no express obligation to go to their military or naval assistance. It was the supreme disaster of our policy that at the crucial juncture our Government held that there was no British interest involved in the maintenance of peace *per se*, provided that our territorial and economic position remained secure.

That, then, was the end of the League. My connection with it began in September, 1916, when I circulated to the Cabinet of which I was a member my paper advocating its formation, and it closed when I declared at Geneva in April, 1946: "The League is dead; long live the United Nations". During those thirty years almost all my public life was occupied with this subject, except the last few years, when I was, like almost everybody else, absorbed in the Second World War.

Just after the Armistice in 1919 I felt that I could not decently remain in a Cabinet pledged to the Disendowment of the Church in Wales after all I had publicly said on the subject. I therefore resigned, but in doing so I asked, and was allowed to conduct the negotiations for the establishment of the League, and I have told elsewhere<sup>1</sup> how I discharged that task. I have often wondered whether I should have done better for the League if I had felt able to remain in office. But on the whole I think not. A Cabinet Minister in England can only do what the Cabinet approves, and I do not think that any Cabinet presided over by Lloyd George or Baldwin would have been really in favour of the League in my sense. Certainly the House of Commons, to which I returned after the Paris Conference, was at best uninterested in the League. I remember a friendly Conservative colleague deeply deplored that I was taken up with what he evidently regarded as a piece of unpractical nonsense. At a meeting of Conservative women, where "Anti-Socialism" was adopted as an election cry, my wife suggested as an alternative that "the League of Nations and Co-Partnership" might be advocated. Soon afterwards she was told by an official of the Conservative Central Office that those were private fads of my own, which did

<sup>1</sup> In *A Great Experiment*.

not form part of the Party programme. There is no doubt in my mind that the average Conservative disliked the League. There were exceptions, particularly among some of the younger men. Both at Oxford, and even more strikingly at Cambridge, when I debated the general principles of the League at the Union of each University, it was supported against very powerful speakers by large majorities. But those included all the Left Parties, and without them I doubt if we should have won. At Cambridge it so happened that the present King and the Duke of Gloucester were in residence, and were good enough to come and listen to the debate between the then Duke of Northumberland and myself. Their presence made the occasion of special importance. Northumberland, a charming and delightful personality, took a very extreme view on the subject. I remember he said in an article that the League was a scheme to put the foreign policy of this country under the control of Monsieur Léon Bourgeois! That really was typical of a considerable section of Conservative thought. The conception that a lot of foreigners should decide on our international rights and dictate to us our attitude to other Powers was simply repulsive to them. And yet there was no section of the community that had more vital interests in the maintenance of peace. The general political tendency to the Left was clear. The House of Lords had been greatly weakened, the Irish had extorted from us Home Rule, the Welsh Church had been disestablished and disendowed, industry was much disturbed by strikes and, most serious of all from the Conservative point of view, the best of the Party were beginning to doubt how long and how far the existing social and industrial system could be defended. Quite apart from the direct horror and waste of war, it was—or ought to have been—clear that another international disturbance such as that from which we had just emerged would bring with it great and perhaps dangerous domestic changes. In no way could the League have done Conservatism any harm, for it was forbidden to interfere in domestic politics. And, indeed, the “atmosphere of Geneva”, though in some respects progressive, was never revolutionary.

My position, therefore, as a Conservative became difficult, and the Irish horrors made it worse. I grew more and more anxious for a new Coalition under Grey. But there really was no hope of such a solution. Apart from other difficulties, his health made it impossible. Then Bonar Law resigned from the Government, taking away one of my chief props. So I decided that I should be happier if I left off sitting on the Government side of the House, and I took my seat as a Privy Councillor on the Front Opposition Bench. But I did not cease to be a Conservative. I remained a member of the Carlton Club and I attended meetings of the Conservative Party. Accordingly, when the Conservatives revolted from the Lloyd

George Government in October, 1922, and there was a General Election, I was again elected as a Conservative for the Hitchin division of Hertfordshire. It was at this time that I was invited to join the Liberals. But I declined. To have done otherwise would have destroyed whatever influence I still retained with the Conservatives without getting anything of political value in exchange. But I was very uncomfortable. I had been collaborating with some of the more Liberal-minded Conservatives including Mosley, and I spoke for him at Harrow. He got in, but had taken such a definitely anti-Conservative line that our co-operation came to an end. I took my seat in the new House of Commons on the Conservative side.

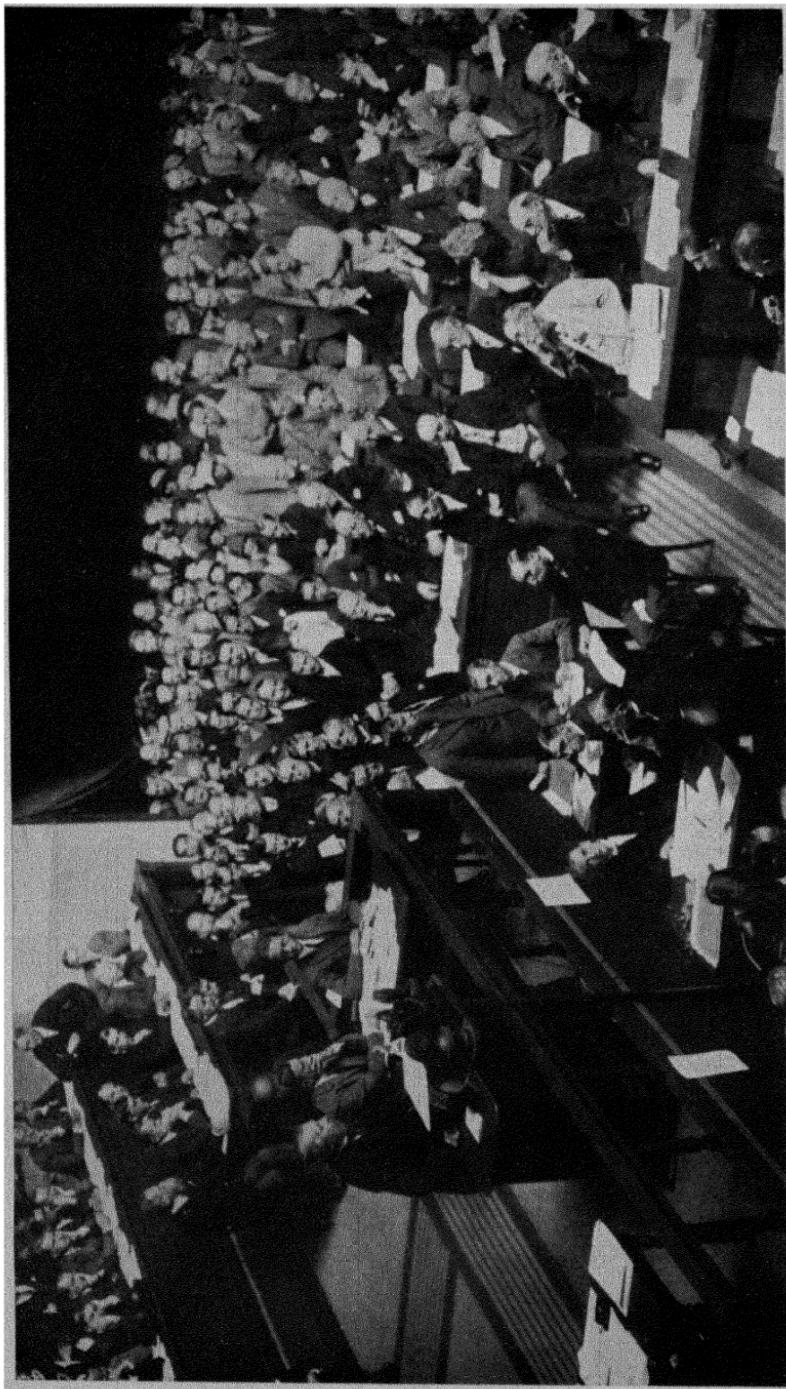
Meanwhile the League went on, and I continued to attend its Assemblies as representative of South Africa. As I have elsewhere explained, the League's influence considerably increased, and all the political leaders in the General Election emphasised their support of it.

Early in the next year—1923—I accepted an invitation to go to the United States and make a series of speeches rather explaining than advocating the League of Nations. Accordingly, with Philip Noel-Baker, who had continued to act as my private secretary for League matters, I sailed on March 21st. We stayed with the Lamonts in New York, who were kindness and hospitality personified.

We were in the United States and Canada for five weeks. During that time I made a number of speeches and answered shoals of questions. Nowhere did I meet with anything approaching incivility. On the contrary, I found the level of public-meeting courtesy was higher than at home. Questions were scarcely ever definitely hostile. It is true that there was manifest a good deal of distrust of European—and perhaps one must add especially of British—statesmen, but that distrust was for the species, and not for the individual. The picture that the average American audience loved to draw was of the guileless and inexperienced American easily taken in by the astute and unprincipled British aristocrat, concluding that the League of Nations was just another plausible snare. However, they listened, and usually came up in crowds when the meeting was over to shake my hand and assure me that I had “entirely altered their viewpoint”. That made the work I was trying to do as pleasant as it could be made, in spite of a lingering suspicion that the great mass of this warm-hearted people would have entirely forgotten all about the speeches and the arguments in them in twenty-four hours.

It was during this visit that I had my last interview with ex-President Wilson, lying helpless in his house in Washington. At Paris he had seemed to me a little intolerant and inhuman. All that impression was submerged by admiration for the wonderful courage and devotion to his





L. O. N. ASSEMBLY, GENEVA, SEPT. 1926. M. BRIAND SPEAKING

great purpose, which made him say: "We are winning! Don't make any concessions."

President Harding, who clearly took little interest in the League but was very friendly to me as an Englishman, and Mr. Hearst, who evidently hated it and us, and Senator Borah, who, after talking to me privately with moderation and good sense, thought it necessary to give an interview to the Press to assure them that he was as much opposed to the League as ever—these and many others I saw.

I noted several differences between the political atmosphere on the two sides of the Atlantic. One was that the working class at that time exercised little political influence in the United States, at least in foreign affairs. All the audiences I spoke to were what we should call "middle class". I never had a working-class meeting. Then there was the importance of the University Presidents and Professors. Men like my much revered friend, the late Nicholas Murray Butler, and President Aydelotte of Swarthmore, seemed to have a much greater political importance than have their opposite numbers here, though there are considerable exceptions, no doubt. Then, to a casual observer, though it seemed that equality was perhaps more secure than it is here, that did not appear to be true of liberty. I was permitted to address the New York Chamber of Commerce and, while waiting for my turn to speak, heard a debate turning on the proposed repeal of a law which made it illegal for a school teacher to express any opinion, even out of school, which tended to bring the Government into disrepute. The proposed repeal was disapproved. Such an attitude would seem to us obscurantist and likely to weaken the respect for the supremacy of law, which is the real guarantee of freedom. The same tendency to try to enforce on people opinions or conduct which was antipathetic to them was shown in the Prohibition Movement, still in its strength when we were there. It seemed to me, as I recorded at the time, "one of the ugliest phenomena I have ever come across", promoting a contempt for the law which showed itself in aggressive drunkenness amongst the rich, accompanied by open breach of the law by the highest-placed officials. I was told of a judge who at dinner was asked whether he objected to cocktails or whisky being served and said he did not. At last, on further suggestion that such an incident might cause difficulties for him, he replied: "I have sworn to administer the law, not to keep it".

I had heard much of the difference between the East and West of the country, particularly in international affairs. No doubt it must be so, since there seemed to be unanimity on the subject. All I can say is that I was not conscious of any great divergence of opinion in the audiences that I addressed. On the other hand the variety of countries from which the Americans are descended was said to affect their attitude to European

affairs. I was told in Chicago that not more than eight per cent of the population was derived from Anglo-Saxon sources, and it was pressed on me how difficult that made it for the United States to act as a member of a body largely concerned with the quarrels of European countries. Any contentious action in such matters by the United States was likely to raise violent disputes in some of the States at home.

Though I was received publicly and privately with the utmost courtesy, it may well be true that my visit produced little, if any, effect. That was the view of Mr. Hearst, though I am inclined to think that neither the President nor his Secretary of State would have altogether agreed. I should like to add that before leaving the country I was given an honorary degree at Princeton—Mr. Wilson's University—which gratified me very much.

On my return to England I found a Cabinet crisis. Bonar Law's health had broken down and he had resigned, dying soon afterwards. He was succeeded by Baldwin, in spite of the apparently superior claims of Curzon. I had nothing to do with it, but there was, I believe, a fairly general feeling that in these democratic days a Prime Minister in the Lords would have considerable difficulties to overcome, which Curzon's personality would have increased. At one time it was thought that he would not go on as Foreign Minister, and if that happened I was told that the post would be offered to me, which I freely admit I should have liked very much. However, it was not to be, and I became Privy Seal. I asked that I should be allowed to deal with League matters, which Curzon agreed to. But he sternly refused to allow me to sit in the Foreign Office, on the ground that there must not be two Cabinet Ministers there. That was an unfortunate decision, and led to a number of petty controversies which would never have occurred if I had been available for consultation at an earlier stage in questions affecting Geneva. No doubt I was very fortunate in having as my chiefs during the end of the war and the beginning of peace such men as Grey and Balfour. Though I was a very old friend of Curzon, his extreme personal sensitiveness made co-operation with him difficult. One incident will illustrate what I mean. I was in Paris in the summer of that year—1923 on some League business. It was just at the time when controversy with France was going on over their occupation of the Ruhr. The President, then Millerand, asked me to lunch and, complaining that Poincaré, his Prime Minister, and Curzon would do nothing but stand like Homeric heroes each in his country and fling denunciations at the other, invited me to tell him what I thought about it. This I did, explaining that of course I could only speak for myself. However, he seemed very glad of my attitude, so when I got back to the Embassy I recorded and sent over to the Foreign Office an account of what had happened. On my return to

London, Baldwin sent for me and explained that Curzon was very angry at my interference and I must undertake not to repeat it!—which I did, though I cannot even now see what harm I had done.

The incident was not in itself of serious importance, but it showed the anomalous position occupied by a Minister in charge of League Affairs outside the Foreign Office. He could not remain indifferent to the foreign policy of the Government, since the League, if it was to have any importance, must be a vital part of that policy. Yet if he even made suggestions with the object of improving international relations, he was rebuked for his interference. Another event of greater moment emphasised the same duality in foreign policy. I have already referred to the Corfu case, in which the League, at the request of Greece, took action to prevent Italy from annexing Corfu. The case, of which the details are set out elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> would have ended in the complete recognition of the authority of the League had not the Foreign Secretary at the last minute saved the Italian Government from diplomatic defeat by securing the admission of the full amount of damages claimed by Italy. These and other similar incidents brought home to me that my Conservative colleagues never really accepted the League as a vital element in the foreign policy of the country. They only tolerated it provided it was kept in its proper place as “an amiable but rather annoying excrescence which we owed to the sentimentality of an American President”. To me this attitude was almost heart-breaking. As I saw the European situation, the causes which had produced the war of 1914 were bound to resume their sway. Again would grow up the fears and jealousies, the greed and ambition which had brought about that catastrophe. For the time being the recollection of the war was too vivid and the exhaustion of the nations was too great for it to be possible that a major war should break out. But we had not much time. I then put it at about ten years. If in that time we had not built up an effective barrier against war, the deluge would be upon us!

It was in the autumn of this year (1923) that Baldwin announced that he intended to bring in a Protectionist budget and that therefore there must be a General Election. I do not know what members of the Cabinet he consulted, if any, before making this statement, but three of them—Novar, Salisbury and myself—who inclined to be Free Traders, were a good deal perturbed. In the end we received a certain amount of consideration, and we did not resign. But I felt that my position as a member of the House of Commons had become impossible. At any minute some sudden change might be announced, and if that affected the League—as it well might do—I might not be able to hold my seat in the face of hostile action by the Party machine. Even without changes of that kind, I had

<sup>1</sup> *A Great Experiment.*

long felt that the League had little real support in the Party and that sooner or later I should have to take a line of my own on it. This I thought would be easier for me in the House of Lords, and so I asked for and received a peerage. The Prime Minister made some difficulties about the details of what I wanted. But I pressed for it, not as a reward, but as a refuge. Undoubtedly it diminished my political importance, but it did enable me to give my whole strength to advocacy of the League.

It was about this time that I received a further offer that I might join the Liberal Party, which I rejected. It was also unofficially suggested to me that I might become Foreign Minister in a Labour Government. But I refused, feeling confident that I could not, with my family and history, hope to receive the support from Labour which would be necessary in order to carry out such a foreign policy as I desired. The truth is that attachment to a non-Party cause is inconsistent with acceptance of Party office.

At the General Election the Conservatives, though they were still the largest Party in the House, were not equal to Liberals and Labour combined. Baldwin met Parliament, and was defeated, and the Government resigned. It was thought even in very high quarters that I should be asked to remain as League Minister. But no such request was made. The only incident of personal importance in the early part of this year was that I attended a meeting of the Conservative leaders and relieved my long-pent-up feelings by denouncing Curzon. It was an exceedingly stupid outburst, and I only mention it as one of the things which added to the difficulties of my co-operation with the Conservatives.

In May of this year (1924) I went for a short tour in Holland and the Scandinavian countries with a personal private secretary, Claude Henty. We went from Tilbury to Goteborg, a very pleasant and peaceful passage. Goteborg had been a great storm centre during the war. Our Consul there had the duty of watching the ships entering the harbour and reporting to the British authorities anything that looked like an attempt to get war goods into Germany. His activities were disliked by some elements in the Swedish Government and very much resented by those who were making fortunes out of such traffic. However, that had all become ancient history, and I made speeches in Sweden and attended dinners in the usual way. From Goteborg we went on to Stockholm, where we stayed at the Legation. The Minister and his very charming wife (now Lady Vansittart) were most kind to us and showed us the sights. The chief one was the modern Town Hall, a very beautiful and impressive building by the sea-side. The architect—Mr. Öst Bergand—was good enough to take us over the building. Some of it was a little beyond me, but I could honestly admire most of it, and did so. We were also taken out on the loch, and

the islands were pointed out to us on which the population in summer disported themselves untrammelled by clothing. I also lunched with Branting, who had been a great friend of the British during the war as a leader of the Social Democratic Party. He had become a little heavy physically and mentally, but he was still of great importance in Sweden. His country had been one of the difficulties of the blockade. Roughly speaking, the Swedish official and military class were pro-German, led by their German Queen. Our friends, as happened in most countries, belonged to the Parties on the Left. We in London, desiring to enforce to the utmost our blockade rights, were hampered by the possibility that the Swedes might definitely join the Germans—not very likely—and more probably might refuse to let us have the Swedish iron ore needed for the manufacture of steel suitable for the best ball-bearings which were essential, especially in air machines. My principal war acquaintance was the banker—Marcus Wallenberg—who came to London to negotiate commercial arrangements with us. I used to tell him he always got more than he was entitled to—certainly he made full use of his advantages. But I liked discussions with him because he was so intelligent. I think it must have been on this occasion that I asked him to explain one incident. A few months before the Germans gave in, Wallenberg told me that he had just come from Berlin and that the Germans were full of fight and hinted that we should be wise to make terms with them, which was of course impossible. He must have known at that time that the Germans were practically beaten, and I asked whether he did not then know that it was so. “Oh yes,” he replied, “but I wanted you to make peace”!

His half-brother—Knut—was Foreign Minister for a good part of the war, and was less pro-British than my friend, but not one of our bitter enemies. While I was there I was presented to the King, principally known in Europe as a lawn tennis opponent of Arthur Balfour, and to the Crown Princess, who was most gracious, and seemed to take great pleasure in talking to an Englishman.

I also went to Upsala to see the Castle, and more particularly Archbishop Söderblom, a very remarkable man. He did very valuable work in trying to organise the Christian Churches, working closely with some of our bishops. To talk to he was exceedingly vivacious, reminding me (except for the fact that he had fair hair) very much of Lloyd George, both in face and figure. I also spoke at a big meeting in Stockholm. I spoke in English, but did not seem to be so well understood as I was in Norway or Holland. Indeed, I felt in Norway more completely *en rapport* with my audience than I did anywhere out of Great Britain. The Norwegian point of view seemed just the same as ours—their fundamental assumptions were identical with ours, and so even was their sense of humour. In a degree

that was true of the other Scandinavian countries, but not so much as in Norway.

From Stockholm we went across to what was then called Christiania, now known as Oslo—a great standby for the makers of cross-words. There also we stayed with the Minister—now Sir Francis Lindley. He was most hospitable and courteous to us, but did not conceal his dislike of the League of Nations. We had an excellent meeting, which His Majesty the King was kind enough to attend. I also had the pleasure of seeing a good deal of Nansen, one of the great figures of Geneva. By profession he was a man of science and also a statesman and diplomatist, and, perhaps more than all, a practical philanthropist. Not one of those philanthropists who confine their efforts to the collection of other people's money. To any cause he took up he devoted all he had—his strength and, if need be, his life. His efforts to help the starving Russians and suffering Armenians injured his health and perhaps shortened his life. It was the same when he worked for the League of Nations. In every crisis of that body Nansen was always to be found in the front line. He had a splendid athletic figure and an impressive, clear blue eye. Not an orator, but a very convincing speaker, always knowing what he wanted, and taking care that his audience should know it also, and never allowing any personal feeling to stand in his way. Perhaps intellectually he was not a genius, but he was something rarer and better—he was a hero. That is not just a piece of flat panegyric. It is the literal truth, and no one who really knew Nansen can have doubted it. Whatever his purpose, once he had adopted it he was ready to pay whatever price was necessary for its success in courage, in endurance and in self-sacrifice. As he said himself in one of his lectures, "Once you have started an undertaking you must never think of the line of retreat". With all this he was neither austere nor ascetic. I can see him now, dancing, playing lawn tennis, sailing on the lake at Geneva, and ready for any enterprise; unmoved by the disapproval of anyone, be he delegate of a Great Power or anything else, except as an obstacle to be overcome! "If we take this line," I said to him once about some question, "we may have to meet the opposition of France and other Great Powers." "Of course," said Nansen, and we continued our action!

It was with this splendid man that I saw the sights of his capital for a day or two, and then proceeded to Copenhagen. That is a much more beautiful city than Oslo, but somehow I found the Danes less attractive—mainly, perhaps, because they seemed rather apathetic about the League. When I was there some of the leading Left politicians were, I was told, inclined to be pro-German. Perhaps for that reason the local League of Nations Society was not very active. One of the days of my visit happened to be a holiday, and I went for a short drive along the coast. I have never seen

so many bicyclists in my life. They had a track of their own, and were riding four a-breast in a seemingly never-ending stream.

From there we went to The Hague, where I lunched with Loder, the then President of The Hague Court of International Justice—perhaps the most successful organ of the League of Nations. It has been, in substance, continued under the Charter of the United Nations. Loder was, I believe, an excellent judge, and gave one that impression—a little inhuman, perhaps, but thoroughly competent and high-minded. I think it was his daughter who said to me, in answer to some compliment on her English, that in Holland one did not consider oneself properly educated unless one could talk four languages—that is, English, French, German and Dutch. All the same, some of the young men looked to me as if they were over-worked. From there we went on to Amsterdam, where we had a splendid meeting, and to Rotterdam, where the pro-German feeling seemed strong. They did not anticipate what was coming to them. Thence back to England, where I found the Liberal-Labour combination breaking up. Indeed, soon afterwards the Liberals decided to turn the Government out over the so-called Red Letter, a missive alleged—I think truly—to have been sent by Russian Bolsheviks to stir up political trouble here. A General Election followed, resulting in the crushing victory of the Conservatives.

But before that happened an event had taken place which further loosened my connection with my old Party. This was their approval of the rejection of the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance. It is often said that the Covenant of the League of Nations failed because it had not any teeth. That is only partly true. It forbade aggressive war, in effect, and directed its members to take all action necessary to prevent it. But it left them to decide what steps were necessary for that purpose. I had been fully aware of this difficulty from the outset, and had worked unremittingly to overcome it. That involved the promotion of two main changes. In the first place, machinery was needed to organise international action against the aggressor. That meant, in the last resort, a combination of military forces against him. To enable this to be done another change was needed. As long as all nations were free to build up their national armaments to any extent, it was clear that the creation of international strength sufficient to submerge the aggressor might be a tremendous job. It followed that before the aggressor could be practically controlled there must be a general limitation of armaments. Conversely, as the French urgently insisted, no nation would consent to limit its means of self-defence unless it was sure of adequate international protection. The two things, therefore, went together. No prevention of aggression without limitation of armaments, and no limitation unless the nations were freed from the fear

of aggression. The result was that, after months and even years of discussion and negotiation, a committee of the League drew up a Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance. It began by laying down, for the first time in an official document, that "aggressive war is an international crime" which all the Members of the League must join in preventing and suppressing. It went on to provide machinery for dealing with such aggression, which included a general reduction and limitation of armaments. Finally, those countries which had carried out such limitation were entitled to the protection secured to them by the treaty, but other countries were not.

To me this proposal was of immense importance. Though only four years had elapsed since the close of the First World War, it was clear that the nations of Europe were beginning to slip back into their old pre-war attitude. The phrase "sacred egotism" had not yet been invented, but the idea dominated Italy in the Corfu case, and perhaps France also in other matters. The same pre-war causes were at work, as we constantly urged on League platforms, and the same results would ensue unless we could make the barriers against war far stronger. What was, then, my consternation when I heard that the Labour Government intended to drop the treaty! But so it was! We had a debate in the House of Lords, in which the late Lord Parmoor announced this decision on various grounds, but really because he still believed that peace would be maintained without the use of force and, I suppose, that individual crime could be prevented without the police! Edward Grey and I protested against this decision. But, most unfortunately, it was approved by Balfour on the miserable old ground that we ought not to bind ourselves by any commitments. I was very angry—always a stupid thing to be—and when Balfour spoke to me about it, as a parliamentary incident of minor importance, I made it clear that I could not take that view of the case.

Shortly afterwards the Assembly of the League met, and the Government found it necessary to produce the so-called Protocol as a substitute for our treaty. It was not a good document. But I need not discuss it since that, too, after it had been pressed through the Assembly, was dropped by the Conservative Cabinet which had come into power as the result of the election in the autumn of that year. At first Baldwin, who became Prime Minister, did not intend to offer me office. But eventually he was persuaded by Halifax and my brother Salisbury to make me Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. I asked him, I remember, whether he was quite sure he wanted me. And as he said he did, I accepted, though with some misgivings.

The next things which happened to me were that I was elected Lord Rector of Aberdeen University with an adequate majority and I received the American Woodrow Wilson Peace Prize. Austen Chamberlain had

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND THE LEAGUE

become Foreign Minister, and I had tried to persuade him to allow me to come into the Foreign Office as a kind of League Minister, subordinate to him. He utterly refused, saying that I could have no more voice than any other Member of the Government in League Affairs, though he might occasionally talk to me about them! Perhaps, on these terms, I ought to have refused office. But I did not and, on the whole, I think my acceptance did no harm. All these events made it increasingly clear that, unless I were to abandon the League as my first political object, I could not remain much longer in the Conservative Party.

Austen Chamberlain was rather averse to my acceptance of the Wilson Peace Prize. But I was determined to do so on every ground, and intimated that if I were not permitted to do so as a Minister I was quite ready to resign.

Accordingly, my wife and I sailed on the *Olympic* arriving just before Christmas after a fairly good voyage. We stayed again with our perfect hosts—the Lamonts—and spent Christmas Day at their little country house on the Hudson. It was very pleasant—a domestic scene, quite in tune with the description of his early life given in that fascinating little book by Lamont himself, *My Boyhood in a Parsonage*.<sup>1</sup> We enjoyed it immensely. We went back to New York, where I made two or three speeches and received the Prize at the hands of Franklin D. Roosevelt. There were many other candidates, including Americans. That the Committee should have given it to me was very gratifying, and showed how large-minded the Americans are, except on the rare occasions when they allow themselves to be blinded by ancient prejudice.

I went down to Washington to be presented to President Coolidge who was very courteous to me. I also saw Secretary-of-State Hughes and his Under-Secretary Phillips at a dinner at the British Embassy. We were alone with the Ambassador, and Hughes made me an elaborate speech to explain how impossible it was for the United States to have any foreign policy. The administration was always at the mercy of the Senate, nor was the Minister allowed to speak in their debates, so that the defence of any treaty had to be left to the leaders of the Government Party in that Chamber, who had necessarily a rather superficial knowledge of the details of the subject. How far all this was the result of irritation with some special incident I cannot say. Both he and Phillips recognised the importance of peace to the U.S.A., and had no alternative to the League as peace-preserving machinery.

On my return to New York I made a last speech in which I said: "I don't mean an alliance. . . . I don't think an alliance is a practical proposition. . . . What I have in mind is a common peace policy, the exercise, the free, unfettered exercise by both countries of their influence and

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written Lamont has died—a great loss to all his many friends and to his country.

their example for the peace of the world". I did not add that this could best be done by common membership of the League—that would have been resented as an attempt to dictate American policy. But of course my attitude on the subject was well known. Next day we started on our home-ward journey. There was a blizzard and heavy fall of snow. We went down to the harbour with Lamont in his car. But we had to stop about three-quarters of a mile away from the landing-stage and get out to walk. Meanwhile our host was hiring porters to take our luggage down to the ship, with a packet of dollar bills in his hand, which he dealt out as if he was playing cards! It was an impressive sight—a typical instance of the marvellous American hospitality.

We got on board, and had a fairly peaceful voyage home. When we arrived there, I found a difficulty had occurred about a conference at Geneva to check the use of opium. Chamberlain could not go to it. He had just come back from the Council of the League which he attended at Rome, as I have explained. Having done so he could not go abroad again to deal with opium at Geneva. He therefore persuaded my brother—Salisbury—to go instead. Unfortunately, just then my brother had a bad fall from his horse, so that there was nobody left but me! I accordingly went and spent some weeks battling with a certain Mr. Porter of the American Congress. He was not a bad fellow, and when he had convinced himself that I was reasonably honest, in spite of being a British diplomat and a member of the House of Lords, we got on very well and agreed on a convention, the purpose of which was to confine the use of opium and other similar drugs substantially to medical purposes. I believe it has worked tolerably well, though there is a lot of illicit drug-smuggling by some of the worst specimens of the human being.

On my return I found the Cabinet about to deal with the Protocol of Geneva. They had, at my request, postponed it till I came home. The proposal was just to drop it as the Labour Government had dropped the Treaty of Mutual Assistance. To me this seemed disastrous. Here was a scheme which, in spite of its defects, did strengthen the hands of the League in dealing with aggression. There did not seem to me any sufficient ground for rejecting it altogether. Why not amend it? However, my colleagues were practically unanimous in favour of destroying it, partly moved by pure Party considerations—it was a Labour proposal and therefore must be bad—and partly by a nationalistic dislike of the League and all its works. Meanwhile, Chamberlain had become convinced that the position in Europe, particularly between the French and Germans, was very precarious, and he was anxious to start the negotiation which led to the Locarno Agreement. I was very much disturbed. It did not seem to me that, even if the perennial quarrel between France and

Germany were settled, that would secure peace. Peace was, as has been said, indivisible. The First World War showed how a controversy beginning in the extreme south-east corner of Europe quickly spread over almost the whole world. However, my colleagues were obdurate. Accordingly it was decided that Chamberlain should inform the Council of the League at its next meeting that the British Government desired to drop the Protocol and should add hopes of some special regional agreement, which was afterwards made at Locarno. I pressed that this regional agreement when made should be extended to the rest of Europe—but that, too, was rejected. On the other hand, I prevented a pernicious attempt by Balfour to get rid of all the coercive parts of the Covenant—to draw its remaining teeth, in fact.

In the result, the Locarno Agreement was achieved; Chamberlain was much praised, and received the Garter. When the Germans decided on their aggression, they paid no more attention to Locarno than they did to any other treaty in their way and, since Locarno was kept apart from the League, none of the machinery of that organisation was directly available for its support. Indeed, the worst part of Locarno was that it diminished the authority and availability of the League. I did not think that at the time. I thought that Locarno might act as a buttress to the League. But I don't think that my fellow-countrymen took that view. With their remarkable political instinct, they saw that to create a special peace arrangement only for a particular controversy, and not make it part of the League, was to undermine the conception of the universality of peace, and would therefore do harm rather than good. When the movement which developed into the Peace Ballot first began, it started as a special vote on peace questions in the district of Ilford.<sup>1</sup> Most of these questions dealt with the support of the League, and they were answered affirmatively by large majorities. One was added as to Locarno, and there the vote was decisively against that transaction. I was much surprised, and when I attended a meeting at which the vote was formally received, I asked why Locarno had been rejected, and I was told that there was a strong feeling against special arrangements for one particular difficulty. No doubt the feeling was quite right, though I did not think so at the time.

In the beginning of this year Asquith retired to the House of Lords and Curzon died. Each event impoverished seriously the political life of the country. As Prime Minister, Asquith had his faults. His training had been that of a barrister, whose business it is to support the case in his brief by all fair means. That is not enough for a Prime Minister, particularly in war-time. He must be prepared to originate policy and insist on its adoption. Nor are the issues so clear as they are in legal proceedings. Decisions

<sup>1</sup> For further account see pp. 171 *et seq.*, and p. 205.

have to be made not as to what was right in the past, but rather as to what is likely to happen and what ought to happen in the future. That means the adoption of definite plans and their energetic support, even if at first their success seems doubtful. In the qualities needed for action of that kind, Asquith was deficient. No one could better weigh arguments submitted to him or had more extensive and accurate knowledge of the facts of any problem. As Chairman of the Cabinet, or any other committee, he was excellent. It was in what may be called instinctive leadership—the faculty of being right and of forcing through his views—that he did not succeed so well. I remember Bonar Law saying to me of Lloyd George that he was a difficult man to oppose. I don't think I should ever have said that of Asquith. But I should have said that he was an almost perfect man to serve. His loyalty, his straightforwardness, his power of reasoning and his astonishingly accurate memory, together with his gift for clear and forcible expression, made him a delightful chief, an admirable administrator and a notable Parliamentarian.

Of Curzon I have already spoken. He was a great figure and a complex personality, but I do not think he was a good Foreign Minister.

The nett result of the events of these years was that the British Government, generally recognised as the chief hope of peace through the League, had rejected two proposals for strengthening the international machinery for peace. The Labour Government destroyed the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Conservative Government rejected its successor—the Protocol of Geneva. That was bad enough, but the reason assigned for this action—the so-called policy of “no commitments”—made it worse. So far Germany had carried out most of her obligations to disarm under the Treaty of Versailles. Having done so, her Government was entitled to claim that France and England would do the same. She had been given most definite assurances to that effect by Clemenceau as President of the Paris Peace Conference. In fact nothing substantial was done in that direction, nor, indeed, could be unless the provisions for collective security were made more trustworthy. The Germans could, therefore, plausibly claim that they were entitled to re-arm, and proceeded to do so. Looking back, this seems to me to have been the turning point. There was still time to build up peace. Hitler had not come into power. Stresemann was the leading spirit in Germany, and he at least pretended that he wanted peace and pressed for German membership of the League. If our Government and that of France had thrown their whole strength into support for an international system, it could have been firmly established. But they would not do so, nor would they adopt the possible alternative—red-hot re-armament. They just drifted along, clinging to such straws as the Locarno Agreement and hoping for the best.

I was mainly concerned in this year at Geneva with the Slavery Convention, of which I need say no more here. Besides this, the League was occupied chiefly in settling the boundary between Mesopotamia and Turkey and in stopping hostilities between Greece and Bulgaria.

In the beginning of the New Year—1926—I had to have my tonsils taken out, a tiresome and rather painful business, from which I took some weeks to recover. When I did so I found a violent controversy had arisen over the admission of Germany to the League. That she should be admitted had been part of the Locarno arrangement. But when it came to the point, French opinion was much disturbed, and demanded as a counterpoise that Poland should be given a status in the League equal to that of Germany. There were grave objections to this being done, and some feeling in the House of Commons that to do so was not really consistent with the undertaking given at Locarno that Germany should come into the League. It was said that this meant that she was to come in with all the rights of a Great Power. To admit Poland on the same terms meant a complete change, since other Powers would also demand equal rights, as they did. Pressed in debate, the Government replied that the matter could only be settled by the Assembly of the League, a special meeting of which had been summoned, and they added, as a guarantee of their good faith, that I was to accompany Chamberlain to that Assembly! Accordingly, I went to Geneva, but found my position there rather curious. The Assembly did not meet at first—which I thought a mistake—but there were meetings in our hotel between Chamberlain and the French and Germans, to which I was not invited. Meanwhile, my friends in the Assembly, headed by Nansen, got very nervous. They did not know what was going on, and I could not tell them. All I knew was that no agreement had been reached. After some days I was admitted to the hotel discussions and found that, as was feared, the promise to admit Poland as a Great Power had brought demands for the same treatment from Brazil, Spain, China, etc., and that Germany refused to accept membership on such terms. I made some suggestions, which were not accepted, and I then imagined that we should report to the Assembly, which would have to decide what they wanted done. But that was not Chamberlain's idea. He thought it would be enough just to inform them that Germany was not going to be admitted and that they had better adjourn. This seemed to me wanting in courtesy to the Assembly and, besides, in substance, very objectionable, as in effect failing to give Germany what we had promised. I wrote to him strongly in this sense, suggesting that I might be allowed to explain my position in public. Austen was terribly upset, and said if I did that he should immediately resign, and I therefore withdrew my request and we went home. The

whole incident showed me that we were not really agreed as to the League. He thought of it as just one cog in the diplomatic machine, to be used or not at the discretion of the Cabinet. I regarded it as the essential international organ for the maintenance of peace.

When we got home I told Baldwin that I must resign, not only or even chiefly because of the incidents at Geneva by themselves, but on the general ground that, as regards peace through the League, my colleagues and I did not "mean the same thing". However, I was persuaded to withdraw my resignation, perhaps wrongly.

In consequence of the muddle about the admission of Germany to the League, after long discussions at Geneva in which I took part as the representative of the United Kingdom, a compromise was arranged by which Germany came in alone as a Permanent Member of the Council. But it was at the cost of the resignation of Brazil and the serious discontent of Spain. It also involved modification of the Council and a considerable increase in its numbers. All this tended to weaken the authority of the League. Next year there was another "incident", this time with America, which, though only indirectly affecting the League, was a serious blow to the strength of the forces for peace.

By the Treaty of Washington in 1921 it was agreed between the U.S.A., Japan and ourselves that we should limit the numbers of our first class men-of-war. Nothing was done about cruisers, and in 1927 President Coolidge summoned a Conference of these three Powers at Geneva to arrange for a similar limitation of the smaller ships. The Prime Minister asked me to go to this Conference with Bridgeman, the First Lord of the Admiralty. Baldwin seemed to think that I should resent not leading the delegation, but I did not. Bridgeman was a very old friend of mine. He lived in Marylebone, as I did, and he had been instrumental in getting me adopted as candidate for East Marylebone in 1905. I felt sure, therefore, we could work together, and it was obviously right that, in a discussion about the strength of our Fleet, the First Lord of the Admiralty should be the chief delegate.

Accordingly, we went to Geneva, I believing that there would be no serious difficulty in reaching an agreement on the lines of the Washington Treaty. So sure was I of this that in passing through Paris, I told my friend—Paul Boncour—that I counted on a successful negotiation which I thought would help the general disarmament position. When we got to Geneva we found that the preparations for the Conference had been very insufficient. It is a maxim of international negotiations of this type that some general agreement should be secured beforehand. Nothing of the kind had been done, except that our assurance was given to the U.S.A. that we were ready to agree to parity with them. It became clear that

there would be difficulties over the size of the cruisers. As to other small vessels, agreement was soon reached. But as to the cruisers, a troublesome controversy arose as to what was meant by parity. The Americans wanted cruisers with eight-inch guns, we wanted them with six-inch, and the question arose how many six-inch cruisers go to one eight-inch cruiser. Into the details of the discussion I will not enter. I quickly arrived at the conclusion that exact parity was unobtainable and that if we insisted on our view of what parity meant there would be no agreement. Such a result would be deplorable. It was quite wrong to treat the question as if we and the Americans were enemies, if not actual, at least possible. In my view, our two Fleets should rather have been regarded as two divisions of a single Peace Fleet, and if the Americans wished to provide a rather larger share of it than ours, that was a matter of no serious importance to us. I also felt very strongly that a failure by the two leading Peace Powers to agree on a minor question of armaments would greatly encourage war-mongers in other countries.

I was not aware of any difference of principle between Bridgeman and myself on these points, and certainly we were agreed as to the form our representations to our own Government should take. Unfortunately we found that the British Cabinet disagreed with us, wishing, apparently, to preserve what the Americans regarded as British superiority. We went home for consultation, and I urged as strongly as I could that if we were to insist on the British view there would be no agreement, and in that case I should have to resign. However, the majority of the Cabinet instructed us to return to Geneva and carry out their views, which we were compelled to do.

This was the last straw for me. Here was, as I saw it, a clear issue between a policy of peace and a policy of prestige in a particularly indefensible form. It was borne in upon me that the difference between myself and my colleagues was fundamental, and I quitted office finally. My principal personal regret at the time was that Bridgeman publicly disapproved of my action.

It is possible that I made a mistake at this juncture. I still hoped that the Conservative Party could be induced to give a genuine support to the League, and I therefore remained a member of the Party. I was urged to lead an electoral attack on the Government. I refused because I could only have done that effectively by joining either the Liberals or Labour, and I was not prepared to do that. The Liberals had, I thought, no practical future. The quarrel between Lloyd George and Asquith had shattered them as a Party. There seemed no reasonable probability that they would ever have a large enough membership of the House of Commons either to carry out a policy of their own or by themselves to defeat a policy

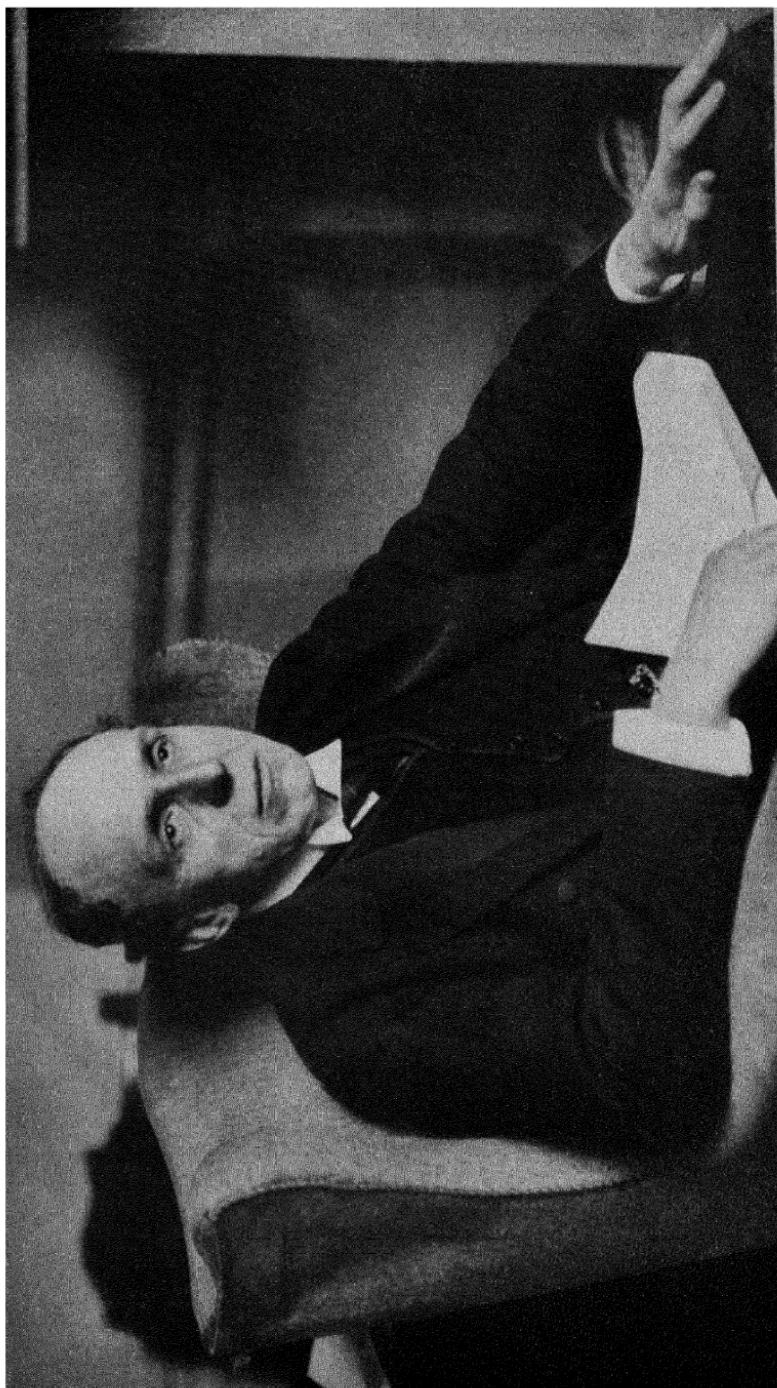
advocated by one of the other Parties. Moreover, in international affairs their position was made rather doubtful by the attitude of their most brilliant member in the House of Lords—Lord Lothian. He seemed to me a very uncertain supporter of the League. The Labour Party were better in this respect, though their leader in the Lords was a pacifist and anti-Leagueur.

On the whole, therefore, I thought I could do a better job for the League outside all Parties. To be honest, I must add that definitely to go into opposition to the Party which had been so victoriously led by my father and which was supported by my brother and my much-loved cousin—Arthur Balfour—was so distasteful that I could not have done it unless I had been quite certain that it afforded the only chance for peace.

In the House of Lords a person in the position in which I was can take his seat on the cross benches, and that I did. Except for making League speeches from time to time, I did not take much part. On one point, however, I did take action. I happened to read a Report of the Police on the dangers of the roads, and was profoundly impressed at the immense increase in the numbers of people killed and injured as a result of the introduction of motor traffic. Here I was only following the lead of the most outstanding orator in the House—Lord Buckmaster. We had several debates on the subject, and received a good deal of sympathy. I went so far as to introduce a Bill to limit the speed of cars and otherwise impose conditions which might lessen the terrible toll of innocent and helpless people who were being maimed and slaughtered. But the Bill was finally rejected. There followed a number of inquiries and futile changes in the law. But the motor interests were too strong for us, and the position has not substantially improved.

Outside the House the most important public event was the signature by all the more important countries of the Kellogg Pact. This agreement, made between Mr. Kellogg—the American Secretary of State—and Monsieur Briand, declared that war must not be used as an instrument of national policy. It did not forbid wars of self-defence, nor did it provide any sanction against those who broke its undertakings. Still, it did in so many words forbid aggressive war, and in the Nuremberg Trials it was cited as part of the case for laying down the principle that aggressive war is an international crime.

In the autumn of next year—1928—my wife and I, by way of a complete holiday, went for a pleasure cruise in the Mediterranean. We were away for exactly four weeks, and had a glimpse of Gibraltar, Sicily, Venice and the Adriatic, Naples and Africa. It was in September, and we had very fine weather, pleasant fellow-passengers and saw a number of beautiful places, though an epidemic of dengue fever in Greece prevented



ROBERT CECIL, 1927 (RESIGNATION)



us from going there. Still, we enjoyed ourselves very much—being slightly entertained by the fact that a large part of the younger members of the party on board took no interest in scenery, architecture or history, provided they could bathe at each place at which we called.

At Geneva the League seemed to be suffering from creeping paralysis as far as the British Government was concerned. Austen Chamberlain was away ill. Cushendun, who took his place, did nothing except to discourage all other Powers from doing anything. There followed a General Election in May, 1929, in which I took little part beyond recommending electors to vote only for candidates who were genuine supporters of the League. I took the opportunity of visiting Madrid, where there was a meeting of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies. It is the only time I have ever been in Spain, and I am afraid the deepest impression I received was astonishment at the hours which were kept. There was one public dinner for us which began at 10 p.m. and lasted till well after midnight, speeches being interspersed between the courses. From the dining-room we adjourned to a theatrical entertainment, which I believe was followed by dancing. However, at about 2 a.m. I went to bed. I remember being told of one restaurant which made it a practice to provide a meal at eight in the morning for those who had been up all night.

From Madrid I went to Paris, where I stayed with some very kind friends—Mr. and Mrs. Lodge—and made some speeches. Thence I went on to Frankfort and Berlin. At Berlin there was a crowded meeting in the old Reichstag, with the President in the chair, and I made a speech in English, which was well received. I believe we had a distinguished audience, including Einstein, to whom I was introduced. He was pleased with me because I had quoted the Old Testament, I forget how. Harold Nicolson, who was then a member of the British Embassy under Horace Rumbold, was also there. Rumbold had worked with me at the Foreign Office during the War, and I had a great respect for him. I remember his describing to me later on an interview with Hitler, in which the latter had made an interminable speech without listening to what the Ambassador wanted to say to him.<sup>1</sup> I asked what course he adopted. "Oh," he said, "I just waited till it was over." Rumbold whose father had been a distinguished diplomat, was brought up largely in Germany. He knew it well and had a very bad opinion of the Germans.

I went back to England, where I found a Labour Government in Office under Ramsay Macdonald. The General Election had made them the largest Party in the House, though not with a majority. Macdonald had proposed to me some time earlier that I should represent this country at

<sup>1</sup> Ciano makes a similar complaint.

Geneva, and I had consented. He now formally repeated this proposal, and I agreed, only asking for a room in the Foreign Office so that, as far as possible, there should not be two voices in foreign policy. Arthur Henderson, the new Foreign Minister, welcomed me, and I was installed in a corner of one of the big rooms there, known as the Cabinet Room because when my father was both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister the Cabinet used to sit there. I was not a Minister or a member of the Labour Party, but a kind of additional Civil Servant. The plan did not work badly. Henderson was a pleasant chief. He was much amused at my being his subordinate in the office which my father had so long directed. But there was no kind of awkwardness between us. His Under-Secretary was Hugh Dalton, and his Private Secretary my old friend Philip Noel-Baker. We all worked together most harmoniously, and I think between us we did a good job. Most of my energies were spent at or in connection with Geneva, where I went as one of the British representatives. It was a great relief to find myself in full accord with my official colleagues, instead of feeling, as I had done at previous visits to Geneva, that fundamentally I did not agree with my Government.

On the whole, the foreign policy record of that Labour Government was not bad, though the Second World War has submerged a good deal of what we did. Still, we may claim to have helped to settle the foundations on which the structure of the United Nations is now being built.

Ramsay Macdonald attended the League Assembly in 1929, and though he was only partly successful in addressing that body, yet the fact that for the first time a British Prime Minister had thought it right to go there added considerably to the prestige of the League. It was certainly a great change after the negative attitude of the previous Government. The United Kingdom resumed its leadership at Geneva, and the whole machine began to work more smoothly and efficiently. There were striking speeches by Stresemann and Briand—almost the last flicker of eloquence from two statesmen who really wanted Peace.

I returned to London and was much pleased by a letter in *The Times*, signed by the Prime Minister (Macdonald) and the leaders of the Conservative and Liberal Parties (Baldwin and Lloyd George) speaking highly of my work for peace and supporting the idea of presenting me with my picture. This was done. The portrait was painted by Laszlo, who did it with great generosity for nothing (the price which had been subscribed being given to the League of Nations Union)—throwing in a smaller and, I think, a better version of it which now hangs at Hatfield. Laszlo was a most interesting talker. He told me the number of portraits he had painted, which amounted, I think, to two thousand! and comprised everyone from Popes downwards.

He had some trouble in the early part of the 1914 war as an enemy subject, and my brother-in-law—the late Lord Selborne—and his wife, with characteristic kindness, had helped him, for which he was profoundly grateful. He had in gratitude painted little portraits of both of them, the one of my sister being remarkably successful. Indeed, it was the excellence of that picture which induced the Committee to ask him to paint me.

Eventually, in December, 1930, the portrait was presented to me, Baldwin making a charming speech, at University College in London. In thanking him I referred to a recent phrase used by Wilson Harris—the present Member for Cambridge University and a distinguished journalist—about “Baldwin Liberalism”. My reference was meant to be very civil, but I am afraid Baldwin did not like it.

It was in the earlier part of this year that Archbishop Davidson died. I was asked to make an obituary broadcast of him. In the course of it I described the immensely important function which an Archbishop of Canterbury has to discharge and then went on:

“. . . Here are duties requiring very great qualities for their discharge—the more so as the Archbishop has practically no official advisers. The whole responsibility rests on his shoulders. He must be courageous, far-seeing, tactful, with great intellectual and great physical powers. All these qualities were possessed by Dr. Davidson. He was a great Statesman, cautious as all those who deal with great problems must needs be. . . . No man was easier to approach or more ready to listen. If anyone asked to see him at Lambeth . . . there in the Library of that historic Palace would be found the Archbishop, ready with all simplicity and courtesy to hear what was to be said. The first impression he made was that of great experience and wisdom. Every word was weighed, every difficulty stated often with some slight irony of phrase. . . . As the interview proceeded, the quiet dignity of the Archbishop, coupled with his wonderful sympathy and kindness, would grow upon his visitor. He seemed indeed the very embodiment of that much misused expression—a Christian gentleman.

“He was not a great orator nor had he any of those brilliant qualities which extort applause. His speeches in the House of Lords and elsewhere were persuasive rather than eloquent. He commanded attention partly, of course, by his position, and largely by his transparent sincerity. When the Prayer Book question was first before Parliament, most observers expected that the Measure would be accepted by the House of Commons, but that it might be rejected by

the House of Lords. In fact the reverse happened. Though the Commons refused it, the Lords accepted it by a considerable majority. I believe the result was largely due to the personal influence of the Archbishop, and we all remember the sympathy and profound respect felt for him even by those who were unable to agree with his proposals. It was his last public action before his retirement and characteristically it was an effort to bring about peace. For he was a lover of peace in all human relations, whether as between striving religious devotees or between employers and workmen in industrial disputes or between the nations of the world in foreign affairs. . . .”

Meanwhile I had been working in the Foreign Office and at Geneva, attending various committees. One of them was on General Disarmament, preparing for a large Conference on the subject. The Disarmament Committee drew up a kind of skeleton on the subject which had no success and caused one of the very few differences of opinion I had with Henderson, who thought I had given away too much to the French. However, I was able to convince him that I had carried out my instructions and that there was nothing in the skeleton which prevented reduction of French strength at the actual Conference. These discussions, which went on for several months, were quite fruitless, owing chiefly to the Nazi Revolution in Germany. As many then suspected, and as we now know, the Nazis were determined on a new war, and for that purpose set about building up a new army. Disarmament, consequently, faded from the picture. The Disarmament Conference failed and the League as a peace machine was allowed—or more accurately forced—to sink into inefficiency. From the point of view of League advocates, that was very bad. But it was even worse that our Government, who permitted this to occur, took few or no steps to strengthen our armaments. I believed—and still believe—that a really vigorous League policy would have succeeded. But if the League was to be dropped, the only possible alternative was a reversion to the old conception of armaments and alliances. That could not be adopted without abandoning the “no commitments” policy and the fatuous claim made during these years that the Government kept us out of war!

In 1930 I had not lost hope of a general disarmament policy backing up an all-out support of the League. The League of Nations Union was still a powerful body and, as representing it, I sought interviews with Henderson, Baldwin and Lloyd George, suggesting that we might have a vigorous movement for general disarmament. I did not get much out of the two first. When I saw Lloyd George, I dwelt on the

central position of the British Commonwealth in international affairs, "like", I said, "that of the Liberal Party in Home politics". "Good God," was the reply, "is it as bad as all that!" I did not see Macdonald, though I often tried to, then and at other times. I always had civil expressions of his wish to see me, but that wish never materialised.

Another League Committee of which I was a member was one to investigate charges of the prevalence of slavery in Liberia. This developed into an effort to induce the Liberian Government to reform generally its organisation. Liberia was in its origin a by-product of the American Abolitionist Movement. Hence the name. It consisted of ex-slaves from the United States, established, with a close imitation of the American Constitution, in a West African territory. As an experiment in self-government it was not a success. In the First World War it had become an ally of the enemies of Germany, and had once received a few shells from a German gunboat. The League Committee sat a long time, and made various proposals which were received with great courtesy by the representative of Liberia, an unmistakable African whose name was Grimes. He was the Attorney-General of the country. Liberia was in debt, and the basis of our discussion was that we might help her to pay her debts if she would accept our reforms. After prolonged discussion she decided that it would be a simpler and better plan if she repudiated her debt. So that was that. I enjoyed Mr. Grimes's society very much.

During the summer of 1931 I went to an International Rotary Meeting at Vienna—a rather futile proceeding—and thence on to Prague, where Masaryk was still President, with Benes as his Minister. I came home by Heidelberg, where I had been asked to address the University. On the whole, I was much encouraged by the people I met on this trip. At Prague there was still confidence and belief in the Geneva Organisation. And so there was nominally at Heidelberg, where they thought, quite wrongly, that the pro-Hitler agitation was subsiding and discussed the entry of Germany into the League. I remember I was not very favourably impressed by the Professors, and noticed that all the boys in the streets were continually marching about, playing at being soldiers. I went home to find everyone much agitated by the great financial slump, which had begun in America and was spreading over Europe.

In August, as a result of the slump, the Labour Government broke up and resigned. After some hesitation, Macdonald decided to join a Coalition and continued in office as Prime Minister. Most of his colleagues, of whom Henderson was the chief, went into Opposition. A General Election resulted in a massacre of the Labour Members, including most of the ex-Ministers—the present Prime Minister—Attlee—being almost the sole survivor of the Labour Front Bench.

Macdonald's action raised once again a very difficult question of parliamentary ethics. He had been put in power by Labour votes, and he used that power to turn out the Labour Government and incidentally to shatter the Labour Party. It is quite true that he at first resigned. But when Baldwin declined to take office, he agreed to go on. That gesture was not enough. His resignation showed that he was conscious that the policy he had adopted was not that which was approved by the voters who had supported him and his Party at the previous election. They had a right to demand that, before any new Government was constituted, they should be again consulted. A dissolution should have been advised, which would probably have resulted in a Conservative majority and a Conservative Government, carrying out a Conservative policy. But that would have been quite straightforward, and we should have avoided that taint of insincerity which, as I think, poisoned our politics until the outbreak of the Second World War.

I do not propose to discuss the effect it had on our domestic policy. In foreign affairs I have no doubt that it contributed to the international hesitations and uncertainty which did so much harm.

As far as I was concerned, the new Government was scarcely in the saddle before the meeting of the League of Nations Assembly was due. No preparations had been made to constitute the British delegation to it. At the last minute I was asked to go as the chief delegate at the head of four colleagues of a nondescript political character. No serious issues were anticipated. But we had counted without the Japanese. They, perhaps seeing that we should be internationally in difficulties, decided to attack China. Accordingly they invented a story of a Chinese attack on them at Mukden, in Manchuria, and immediately took military action against the Chinese forces there. Thereupon China appealed to the League, and the matter was brought before the Council. My position was extremely awkward. I had no instructions. Owing to the peculiarities of the Prime Minister, I had never been allowed to see him, so that I had no idea of what was in his mind. Reading was acting Foreign Minister. But he had no personal knowledge of the League, and did not attend the Assembly nor this meeting of the Council. However, it passed a certain number of resolutions calling on the two Powers not to fight, and then adjourned for a fortnight. That I spent in visiting Rome, where I had the very great honour of being received by the Pope (Pius XI). He was most gracious to me, expressing warmly his approval of all that I had been trying to do, though evidently taking a gloomy view of what was likely to happen. He had a very remarkable personality, with which I was deeply impressed. One little incident is perhaps worth recording. On the day following my interview with the Pope I again visited the Vatican, hoping to see the

Cardinal-Secretary of State—the present Pope. He was away, and I saw one of the officials instead. We had a short, formal conversation. What was my surprise a few weeks later to hear that it was being said in certain circles that my second visit to the Vatican was made in order to explain away my interview with the Pope. Truly *odium theologicum* produces very strange results in certain individuals!

It was during this visit to Rome that I had a very brief interview with Mussolini. It was quite unimportant.

I returned to Geneva, and this time was joined there by Lord Reading. As everyone knows, our efforts to restore peace in the Far East failed, with disastrous results everywhere. No better example can be found of the great truth that "Peace is indivisible". However, we still went on trying. The next meeting of the Council was held in Paris. By that time Lord Reading had been succeeded as Foreign Minister by Sir John Simon. This meeting was even more ineffective than the previous meetings in Geneva. Indeed, the new Government were resolute about only one thing in Foreign Affairs, and that was to do nothing.

I look back on the next few weeks with considerable disgust. The Japanese simply played with us. We did not realise it then. But what had really happened at Tokyo was that the army had displaced a relatively reasonable Ministry and had determined on a policy of Asiatic domination. They began by faking a cause of war in Manchuria and proceeded to overrun that province. At intervals they professed a readiness to accept some more or less reasonable terms by which they would leave China in peace. But that was all humbug. And after a brief interval they resumed their career of conquest, ultimately ending by bombarding and destroying a large part of Shanghai. Whether we could have stopped them by vigorous action is doubtful. I urged it more than once, but the Cabinet would have none of it. They held that we had no "interest" in the events of the Far East, and submitted to repeated deceptions and insults rather than break with Japan. It was this attitude that made it impossible for me to serve them with any satisfaction. I do not pretend that I foresaw all the events that followed. But it was clear that every time the peace-loving countries submitted to militarist aggression, wherever it took place, they made it more difficult to prevent further attacks elsewhere. No doubt the position was not easy. The League was weak in the Far East. America was still outside it, and Russia had not yet come in. Japan was relatively powerful and quite ruthless and China was an easy prey. In the end it was agreed to send an International Commission, presided over by the late Lord Lytton, to examine the situation and report. Lytton proved a chairman of great courage and, by his inspiration, his four colleagues, representing the United States, France, Germany and Italy, agreed on a

Report condemning Japan and proposing a settlement which would have given some protection to China—a considerable achievement. The League confirmed the Report, which was indeed accepted by the whole of world opinion. But the British Government declined to take any action in its support. Indeed, it alone of all the League Powers at Geneva appeared to defend Japanese action. I have no doubt that these events encouraged the aggressions in Europe and Africa by Italy and Germany which ended in the outbreak of the Second World War.

Meanwhile the Disarmament Conference was to meet in February, 1932. When I returned to London from Paris I was asked by Sir John Simon whether I would be one of the British delegation to it. I felt that, in view of the difference of opinion on international affairs which existed between the Government and myself, I could not represent them without knowing what their policy on disarmament was, and I accordingly so replied. There followed three interviews with Simon at the Foreign Office. He was extremely courteous and patient, but could not tell me what the British delegation was to do at the Conference. At last I gathered that the view of the Government was that they had done all that they could with regard to naval disarmament and did not propose to initiate any definite policy on land or air. In those circumstances I said that I could not accept the position of a delegate then, but if the position became clearer I would be ready to reconsider the situation. In fact, the earlier sittings of the Conference did seem to me to be an advance in British policy, and I offered to join the delegation. However, luckily for me, my offer was declined. The Conference gradually subsided into impotence.

At the first meeting of the Conference it was arranged that certain outside bodies should be heard before it actually got to work. Among them the Federation of League of Nations Societies, of which I was then President, was one. I accordingly spoke briefly, setting out the policy of the Federation. This was to forbid for everyone some of the larger and more aggressive weapons which were already forbidden to Germany by the Treaty of Versailles, and to provide for the security of any of the countries which had accepted and acted on this prohibition if they were attacked. The suggestion was well received, but was later on stifled in the Conference. Meanwhile a Revolution took place in Germany, and Hitler came into power in the early part of 1933.

In this year another misfortune for peace occurred in the death of Briand. All through the Manchurian crisis he had been a very sick man. He used to attend the meetings of the Council in Paris and, after asking someone—often myself—to open the proceedings, he immediately went to sleep. But in earlier days he had fought strenuously on every

occasion for peace, and had achieved a position in France which made it impossible for any government of which he disapproved to survive. Indeed, his popularity in France was immense—in spite of the fact that he had few friends in the Paris Press and some very bitter enemies.

What was the secret of this astonishing position? He was no doubt a great Parliamentarian. But that by itself would not account for his popularity in the country. It is more to the purpose that he was a persuasive and moving speaker. I have heard him at Geneva, and some of his speeches, notably that on the admission of Germany, showed the deep and genuine feeling which “gets over” to an audience. He had a beautiful voice—golden, his fellow-countrymen called it—delightful in tone, flexible in expression. His humour was specially attractive—constantly ready, colouring almost everything he said and always absolutely in tune with his audience.

He came from Brittany. Indeed, he was as typically a Breton as Mr. Lloyd George was a Welshman. Physically they were wonderfully alike, obviously of the same race, with the same personal charm and the same conversational attraction.

I remember being told by one of Monsieur Briand’s associates that he had been largely educated by a country clergyman near Nantes. It was, if my informant was right, a special kind of education. It did not depend on reading, but on talking. It was said, probably with much exaggeration, that Briand never read a book through and that in office he was impatient of official papers. Certainly he used no notes when speaking. I suppose before he got up he had some general idea of what he was going to say and the line he was going to take. But he drew a large part of his inspiration from his audience.

He had entered Parliament as a Socialist. But that phase did not last long. He found Party labels intolerable, and when he died he was not a member of any Party or group—or, as he put it, he belonged to the group of those who did not belong to any group. But he was a passionate lover of peace. It was not only that he had a hatred and horror of war in itself. It was not only that he could say with profound conviction when he welcomed Germany to the League: “No more blood, no more cannon, no more machine-guns”. But all his statecraft, all his desire for progress, all his Frenchman’s love of France combined to make him believe in and work for peace with every energy he possessed. He worked for an understanding with this country and obtained the confidence of successive Foreign Ministers. He was not less trusted, and even beloved by Austen Chamberlain than by Macdonald and Henderson.

I attended his funeral in the country, at which, according to French custom, Herriot delivered a florid eulogy, and then we filed past Briand’s

relations drawn up in line, shaking hands with each of them as we passed. It was not an impressive ceremony.

Perhaps in the coming years his most enduring fame will depend on his work for the League of Nations. He attached the greatest importance to it. When Monsieur Herriot formed his Government in 1924, Briand asked for no office except that of permanent French Delegate to the League—a position he held practically till his death. It was this love of peace that endeared him to his fellow-countrymen. In the lobbies of the Chamber, influenced too much by warlike interests, Briand had many critics. Whenever anything went wrong, if a turbulent speech were made in Germany or an unwise policy were pursued in Austria, a factitious clamour was raised in such quarters that it was all due to the Briand policy. But the French people were unmoved. When, in consequence of the interested opposition referred to, Briand was defeated for the Presidency of the Republic, 60,000 of his fellow-countrymen came to a great meeting of sympathy and confidence.

Meanwhile the Disarmament Conference had met and was discussing various plans. From the time that Germany accepted the Nazi Government the prospects of success were slight. Hitler and his associates were determined on war. He worked against the League continually and, of all its activities, he hated the Disarmament Conference most. On that point the other two countries which shortly afterwards formed part of the Axis agreed with him. Japan aimed at Asiatic pre-eminence, and Italy, having turned to Mussolini to rid itself of parliamentary incompetence and corruption, adopted his vague visions of military revival and the reconstruction of the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean. It is astonishing that the inevitable co-operation of these three disturbers of world peace never seems to have been appreciated by the other European Governments, which, in principle, accepted the view that peace was the greatest of their national interests. Japan had already occupied Manchuria and was stirring up trouble in Central China, Italy was beginning to manufacture an excuse for attacking Abyssinia, and Germany was getting ready to send her forces into the Rhineland. To meet these obvious and pressing dangers, the only possible course would have been the strengthening of the League. America did make some moves—half-hearted, it is true—in that direction. More than one American representative, like Mr. Norman Davis and Mr. Stimson, did suggest that they would perhaps help the League if it resisted the aggressors. And in this year I was approached by the Russian Ambassador—Maisky—through H. J. Laski, as to whether I thought Russia would be admitted to membership of the League if she asked for it. I answered in the affirmative, pointing out that the religious policy of the Soviet Government might cause some difficulty here, for at

that time it seemed to be very definitely anti-Christian. However, although the American and Russian Governments were moving uncertainly towards Geneva, the British Government, under the Coalition, and the French Government, under the inspiration of Laval, did nothing to help. On the contrary, the Macdonald Government seemed to lose no opportunity for weakening and belittling the League. I think there can be no doubt that the Prime Minister and some of his Liberal and Conservative colleagues hated the League. I remember at one of the very few interviews I had with him some years later he enlarged on the delights of confidential conferences with foreign statesmen, such as occurred in the days of the Congress of Vienna, whereas he openly disliked Geneva and all its ways.

In the course of this summer I had been asked by the Royal Institute of International Affairs to take part in a Conference of the representatives of the British Commonwealth at Toronto in the early autumn. The Conference was to discuss the position of the Dominions in international affairs, and after some discussion I agreed to go. A little later on, to my great surprise, I received an invitation from Simon to attend the League Assembly as one of the British delegation. For me to have gone there would have been futile, if not dishonest. I disagreed altogether with the Coalition League policy. At this very Assembly the British Government, by vehement endeavours, reduced the League budget by some £6,000, of which the United Kingdom share was £600—an incident which illustrated vividly the value officially attached to the only international instrument for maintaining peace. In any case, by the time I was invited to Geneva, I was pledged to the Toronto meeting and I carried out my pledge. We met there frequently, and discussed Dominion organisation for international affairs. We passed no resolutions, but drew up a Report from which two things emerged. One was that the Dominions representatives were resolutely opposed to the creation of a central Committee of the Commonwealth to which any kind of control of foreign policy was given. It seemed to be felt that such a Committee, meeting almost necessarily in London, would be thought to be directed by the British Foreign Minister and his office, and that would be bitterly resented in other parts of the Commonwealth. On the other hand, it was not disputed that all the Dominions were to some extent jointly and severally interested in British foreign policy, and that it was therefore right that there should be the fullest possible Commonwealth consultation on the subject. The problem was to find some efficient and rapid method of consultation which would yet leave the complete independence of each Dominion untouched. I favoured an adaptation of the kind of relations which existed at Geneva during the meetings of the League between the United Kingdom and the

other Dominions. There we were in the habit of consulting together over any important question, though each country in the Commonwealth was left free to take whatever course it thought desirable. In fact, differences of opinion were rare. The creation of the new Commonwealth Relations Office may possibly make a difference. Otherwise I should welcome weekly or more frequent meetings of representatives of the countries concerned, presided over by the Foreign Secretary or his deputy, at which full discussion of every aspect of international affairs could take place. My experience in Toronto certainly confirmed my view that we were as yet a long way off the possibility of those larger measures of Federal Union which are so popular in some quarters.

In other ways I enjoyed this visit very much. I admired what I saw of Canada. I was properly impressed by Niagara. I spent a delicious afternoon in a garden by Lake Ontario and, above all, I experienced once again the wonders of Transatlantic hospitality.

On my return to England I was asked to go to Geneva to wind up the Liberia affair, which was eventually done. I found the League atmosphere very depressed. The Assembly was over. It had been attended by Goebbels, surrounded by a bodyguard, using his presence at the shrine of international peace to preach nationalism and war. Besides this, our Government had first been fiddling about with a Four-Power Pact, negotiated in Rome, of which the only practical result was still further to depress the authority of the League. Next they arranged an economic conference in London, which was also quite fruitless. Had they utilised the League machinery for these two negotiations, something might have come of them, and at least the world would have seen that the Western democracies were sincere in their repeated assertions that support of the League was the basis of their foreign policy. The political dishonesty of the British attitude was emphasised by a speech at Geneva of Mr. Te Water, the South African delegate, who was the President of the Assembly for that year. He made an eloquent appeal for the Great Powers to give a vigorous lead. The British response was to reduce by £600 their contribution to League funds! as I have already said.

This year Eric Drummond (now Lord Perth) resigned his position as Secretary-General of the League, a deplorable loss to that body. He is still, fortunately, in full activity, and I will only say that while he was Secretary there was still hope for Geneva. By his knowledge and impartiality, coupled with his acute judgement, he had achieved a position of great international authority, which he used solely to promote peace through the League. That he was unable to do more was the fault of those Governments, including the British, which undermined the League without putting anything in its place.

In the beginning of 1935 I addressed the University of Brussels on the League, when I also met Count Sforza, then a political exile, now Foreign Minister of Italy. Though he was not very hopeful of the League, he was its convinced supporter. It was during my visit to Brussels that King Albert was killed in a climbing accident—another blow to the cause of peace. I also went over to Ireland, speaking at Belfast and Dublin. I was equally well received in both cities. At Dublin I met De Valera, who attended our meeting, as did his political opponents.

These events showed that, in spite of everything, there was a great amount of support for the League in Europe. As I have already explained, an incident at Ilford induced the League of Nations Union to believe that that was also the case in England. At Ilford the local Branch of the Union, led by Mr. Boorman, had organised there a popular vote of support for the League. They had put certain questions on the subject to the general public, and had received a remarkable response, showing that in this district of London there was still a strong belief in the idea of international action for peace. This was made the more emphatic because on a question raising the Locarno policy the vote was decisively against it—to my great surprise.<sup>1</sup>

The general result of the Ilford voting induced some of us to wonder if a much wider experiment of the same kind, extending over the whole country, might not be equally successful. The situation certainly called for some effort on the part of the advocates of peace. The drift towards war was becoming unmistakable. It was the fashion in Ministerial and sub-Ministerial circles to scoff at the League and at the Geneva meetings and to revert to diplomatic methods, once of value, but now completely out of date. When any protest was made, a common reply was that public opinion was hostile and that the Government was doing as much for international peace as the democracy permitted.

It was to meet this point of view that the “Peace Ballot” was organised. Conservative critics chose to regard it as an anti-Governmental move. That was certainly not its object. Before anything was done we called a meeting of the representatives of the political Parties, including the Chief of the Conservative Central Office. The plan to have a national vote of confidence in the League was explained and an all-Party support for it was asked. It is true that, after consideration, the Conservatives officially declined to help, though the other two Parties agreed to do so. Later on the project was hotly denounced by Simon and Austen Chamberlain. The only intelligible reason was one question which we asked challenged the desirability of the manufacture of armaments for private profit. The other five questions were simply paraphrases of the Covenant

<sup>1</sup> See also p. 171.

put into the form of questions. But it was said that the reference to private profit was outside that document. Verbally that was true, but not substantially. The Covenant said that "the manufacture by private enterprise of . . . implements of war is open to grave objections". We asked whether the manufacture for private profit should be prohibited! Will anyone believe that this slender difference of phrasing was the real reason for the fury roused in certain minds by the Ballot? It may be true that it gave point to Chamberlain's hostility, for the manufacture of certain war weapons is an important part of the industry of Birmingham. But that did not explain the attitude of other Ministerialists. It is my opinion that the explanation might be sought in the anti-League convictions of a large section of Tory wire-pullers, no doubt fostered and increased by the very wealthy organisations whose fortunes depended on armaments. As Briand used to say towards the end of his life: "The pens which attack my policy are made of the same metal as is used for making weapons of war!"

In spite of this opposition to the Ballot we went on. At first we hoped for some five million votes. That was regarded by experts as mere optimism. In fact, about eleven million ballot papers were filled in, with overwhelming majorities for the League. Lord Beaverbrook, one of our most strenuous opponents, christened it a "Ballot of Blood". That helped us very much. Gradually Conservative objurgations died down, and by the summer of 1935 Baldwin, who had by then become Prime Minister, spoke of the Ballot as having great value, as I have already recorded.

I had seen Eden, then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in the autumn of 1934, and told him that I heard on excellent authority that the Italians—or rather, Mussolini—were plotting an attack on Abyssinia. He had, I think, heard the same thing, and assured me that it would not be overlooked. During the succeeding months preliminary quarrels with Abyssinia had been staged by Mussolini. On four successive occasions the Ethiopian Emperor—Haile Selassie—had been encouraged by the British Government to appeal to the League on the subject, and he had done so. In the late summer of 1935, as I have already said, Eden asked me and a number of others whether we would support the Government in resisting Italian aggression. I of course gave him the assurance he asked for. Meanwhile Simon had been succeeded by Sir Samuel Hoare—now Lord Templewood—as Foreign Secretary. Both he and Eden went to Geneva for the Assembly, and made strong speeches on behalf of the League. Hoare's speech on the 11th September was particularly definite. He used language which was understood to refer to the results of the Ballot to fortify his assurances. Nevertheless, Mussolini attacked Ethiopia and, to the delight of his Italian adherents, his aeroplanes bombed the

unarmed Abyssinians. There followed a vote by the League Assembly which, by fifty votes to four, declared Italy the aggressor. So far, so good. The next step should have been the breaking off of all diplomatic relations between Italy and the Powers which had given that vote. That should have been followed by a notice to Italy that she would not be allowed to send supplies or reinforcements to her troops in Africa. An appeal should also have been made to the United States to join with the League Powers in depriving Italy of petrol. Steps of that kind would doubtless have stopped the Italian militarists, who probably had little or no support from the civil population. It was whispered, as I have noted, that we could not take any such action because we had no ammunition for the guns of our Fleet. I doubt very much whether that was really the case. Instead of vigorous action of this kind, there was a half-hearted interference with some of the food supplies of Italy. Moreover, even this was accompanied by the British statements to Mussolini that this action was not directed against the Italian Government as such, and by more secret assurances from Monsieur Laval that there would be no serious attempt by the League to coerce Italy. Even so, the economic pressure proceeded quite smoothly, and if continued might perhaps have eventually induced Italy to yield.

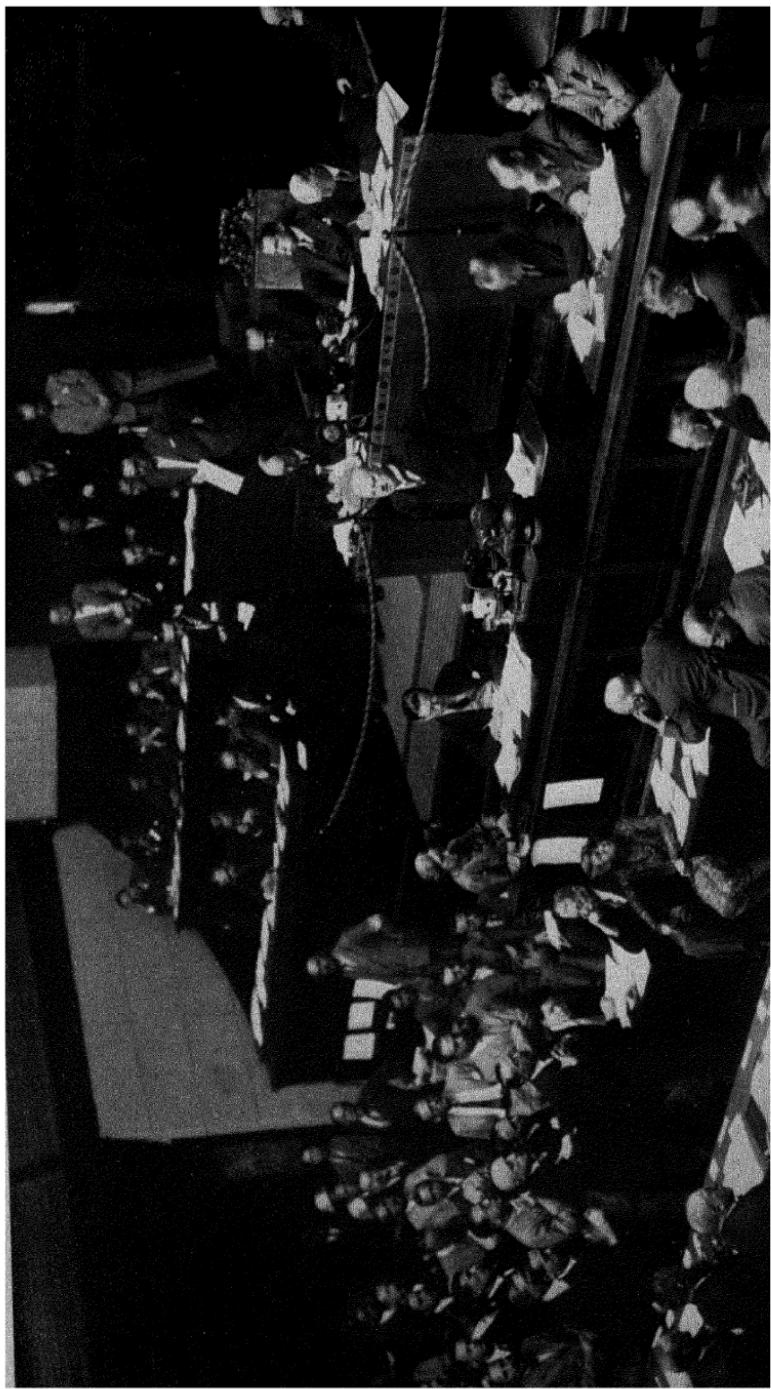
Meanwhile a General Election took place in the United Kingdom. Much was said on the platform about the League policy of the Government. I made some speeches. I remember particularly one at St. Helen's, in Lancashire, in which, relying on the Government assurances, I gave a general support to their attitude. Immediately after the election came the news that, in the teeth of the Government professions, and particularly of the September speech of the Foreign Secretary, the Government had agreed with Monsieur Laval that there should be a partition of Abyssinia by which a large part of it would be transferred to Italy. A violent explosion of opinion in England followed, and the Government were forced to withdraw from the agreement. The Foreign Secretary resigned, but not the Prime Minister! Nor is it even now certain how far he was aware of the Foreign Secretary's action!

The next few months were a melancholy period in our history. Having urged the unhappy Ethiopians to trust in the League, we found ourselves unable—or unwilling—to do anything to help them. Alone, without modern armaments, they never had a chance of resisting the Italian troops. The principal places in the country, including the capital, were occupied, not without some of the barbarities common in such proceedings. For a time a pretence was kept up that sanctions would be enforced against Italy. There was talk of cutting off their supply of petrol, but nothing came of it. And so matters drifted on, the Government moving

progressively away from the League until one of its principal members—Mr. Neville Chamberlain—declared in June of 1936 that to rely on sanctions was “midsummer madness”. No doubt by this time he had come to believe that the only hope for restoring tranquillity to Europe was by the policy which was afterwards called “appeasement”. On paper there was a good deal to be said for it. Germany was already strong, and growing stronger. Italy, the ally of Germany, was believed to be much more powerful militarily than she actually was. France was rightly deemed essentially pacific. Russia was an unknown quantity, not thought to be of great practical importance. American action seemed very unlikely. If, therefore, the Germans could be induced to co-operate with us for peace, war might be avoided. That, I take it, was the calculation on which was based the policy of the British Government. The first thing, therefore, was to get rid of the Abyssinian question or, in other words, to abandon Abyssinia to Italy. We did not actually assist Italy to conquer Haile Selassie and his people, but we did nothing to prevent her doing so. At first we refused to recognise the conquest. But soon that rag of consistency was abandoned and British Ministers went to Geneva to explain that the British Government had two duties: one was to protect Abyssinia in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant, and the other and more important duty was to keep the peace—that is, to avoid further quarrel with Italy. Meanwhile another Minister had made in the House of Commons the declaration already quoted that he would not sacrifice a single British ship in order to maintain Abyssinian independence. That was the essence of the policy. It was a reversion to the crudest international conception that the business of each sovereign Power was to look after its own interests, which meant its own territorial and commercial position and nothing else. But it was worse than that because it involved the breach of the definite pledge in the Covenant to “respect and *preserve* the political independence and the territorial integrity” of Abyssinia as a fellow-Member of the League. The climax was reached when in 1939 two British statesmen, our Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, went to Rome to congratulate Mussolini on his victory!

Had the policy succeeded, that might have secured a peace—even if it were a discreditable peace—with Italy, and that might have pleased Germany. But it naturally failed. Italy pocketed Abyssinia and asked for more. The events which followed displayed the inevitability of a Greek play. In March of 1936 the Government had produced a White Paper in which, while playing lip service to the principles of collective security—that is, the preservation of peace by international action—it asked for support for an increase of armaments quite insufficient if we were to revert to the old Treaty of Vienna type of policy. Some of the more





L.O.N. ASSEMBLY, GENEVA, SEPT. 1929. DR. STRESEMANN SPEAKING

ardent supporters of the idea of a League peace were inclined to resist the demand for further armaments. Neither I nor the League of Nations Union took that view. To my mind it was for the Government to say what armaments were necessary. Under the League system it was our obligation to prevent aggression, if necessary by force. For that purpose, at least until some general scheme of reduction and limitation of armaments everywhere had been put in force, it was requisite to keep in being whatever forces by land, sea and air the Government declared to be necessary. When, therefore, a motion was made in the House of Lords approving the demands of the Government as stated in the White Paper, I both spoke and voted in favour of that motion, as I have said,<sup>1</sup> only asking for an assurance that the increased forces would be available in support of the League, and that was given to me.

The next step towards war was an announcement by Germany that, in spite of her treaty obligations not to militarise the Rhine Provinces, she was going to do so. Accordingly her troops marched in, thus occupying what would be the first stage in her future invasion of France. There was naturally a great outcry in Paris. But I felt a difficulty in urging our Government to take vigorous action on this occasion. As far as the League was concerned, there had been no invasion by Germany of foreign territory. She had occupied militarily part of the territory that belonged to her. In doing so she had broken her treaty obligation, but could scarcely be accused of having "resorted to war" within the meaning of the Covenant. If the French had chosen to resist, as they were entitled to do, and Germany had attacked them, that would have raised another question. Probably the British Government discouraged any such action by the French. In any case, the French did nothing, except join in remonstrances to Berlin, which were worse than useless. They only convinced the Germans that, as far as England and France were concerned, the League was moribund. This became quite clear from the debates this year (1936) in the Assembly.

It must have been about this time, or perhaps a little earlier, that I told a member of the Government with whom I was familiar that if impeachment were still in fashion I had no doubt that the leading members of the Government ought to be impeached. He seemed very surprised at such a statement. But I think it was right. The policy that had been pursued seemed to me to be leading straight to war. It had involved, and was likely to involve still more, a breach of our clear pledges. It was destroying the only international instrument that existed for the preservation of peace without putting anything in its place. If the intention was to revert to the old diplomatic conception that we must only fight for British interests,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 170.

which meant our territorial and commercial possessions, then the White Paper "rearmament" proposals were almost ludicrously insufficient. I did not, indeed, foresee what a terrible price we were to pay for our policy. But I did feel and say that it was utterly wrong.

The Spanish Revolt, which occurred just then, provided another example of the Government policy, or rather want of policy. Some years earlier the Spanish Monarchy had been overthrown and the King driven from the country. Though I knew little about the King or his family, I had had a good deal to do with the representative of Spain during the First World War and afterwards. During the war she undoubtedly preferred Germany to France. As a Spaniard once said to me: "In Spain there is a German Party and an English Party. But there is no French Party" But after the war, as long as she was guided by that admirable diplomatist, Señor Quinones de Leon, she was a strong adherent of the League. At Paris, Quinones was the first neutral to apply for membership of the League, and later became a very constant attendant at Geneva. It is true that he treated the League chiefly as a piece of diplomatic machinery to be used to enable his country to play an important international part. But even so, he recognised the value of the League to Spain, and accordingly Spain was usually to be found on the right side in League questions. When the Monarchy came to an end, Quinones, who was a convinced Royalist, disappeared from Geneva, which thereby lost the presence of a cultivated gentleman of great social talent. But the general League policy of Spain was continued by the Republican Government.

There followed the revolt, led by Franco. It was of a type which in my youth was known as a military "pronunciamento", of which there were many examples in Spanish history.

At first our Government declared it would not intervene in what was a purely Spanish affair. That may have been right at the start, though if the League had not been let down by the Western Powers its machinery might have been used to restore peace. Instead of action by the League, an International Committee was set up in London with a view to "keeping the ring" and allowing the Spanish Parties to fight it out without foreign interference. Its proceedings were futile. Very soon Russia on one side and Germany and Italy on the other sent armaments and supplies, and even some troops, to the insurgents and to the Republican Government respectively. The Civil War accordingly proceeded with varying fortunes, and very soon foreign "interests", including our own, began to suffer, especially from Italian naval action. Violent protests followed, and a conference took place at Nyon, close to Geneva, but far enough away to enable our Government to assure the Germans that it was not a League proceeding. It was successful in this sense, that the moment the Italians

But his chief method of communicating with the people was by radio-broadcasting.

I went with the President to the Annual Dinner of a Washington Club. The dinner was a lengthy affair. It began by a preliminary meeting of a few of the diners, in which the President introduced me to various local notabilities. The dinner lasted from about seven o'clock till nearly midnight. There were some three hundred diners, and a rather discordant band. My two neighbours were as courteous as all Americans are to strangers. At a given moment the chairman—I think on a hint from the President, who sat next to him—called on the company to greet me. They all got up and clapped and bowed, and I bowed in return. This was part, evidently, of a settled plan of the President's demeanour to me. Both he and several of his Ministers, as well as his family, went out of their way to treat us with elaborate courtesy and deference. For instance, after the dinner we all went out to the car, and found, as always everywhere, a crowd waiting to see the President. He stood to acknowledge their clapping, and immediately called me to his side so that everyone might see me.

Next day—Sunday—we went, at the President's suggestion, with him to “his church”—that is, the church of which he was a “vestry man” before he became President. He put us into a little pew with him, and after church he elaborately presented me to the clergyman.

In the afternoon he took us for a drive in an open car—it was a glorious day—to see the new public buildings, and then to Arlington, which was full of people enjoying the fine Sunday afternoon. We were with the President in the back seat. Wherever we went he was greeted most warmly and with a note of personal regard and affection.

To go back to the dinner; it concluded with a speech by the President, the first part of which was chaff. Then he spoke of peace, emphasised the seriousness of the position, made some reference to my father and myself, and concluded by saying that the continual disregard of international order by the dictatorship Powers was a grave evil, and that if it went on it would become necessary for the great democratic Powers to take action. This did not seem to be an immediate policy, but to refer to some future date.

In the course of an earlier talk he had very strongly condemned the Japanese, and when I suggested the possibility of his taking part in some economic pressure, he said that he had succeeded to a position which had been compromised by Wilson's conduct of the League issue. He gave a very vivid description of how Cox and he, as candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, had taken a strong pro-League stand in 1920. He felt that it was useless to try to shirk the issue, and had so told Cox, who rather reluctantly agreed. They went to see Wilson—by then

a very ill man—and told him of their decision. Wilson in reply, speaking with difficulty, had said, “I am very grateful”, which deeply affected Cox, who thenceforth made the League the chief issue in the campaign. The result was defeat, and since then the League had been deeply suspect. He was engaged in trying to re-educate the electorate, but it took time.

He then made a kind of commentary on a recent speech of his at Chicago, saying that he felt that without going to war, if Japan would not behave it might be necessary politely to tell her that we could have no more dealings with her—“put her in quarantine”. I said that I did not believe that she would in fact reply by attacking either of us, but she might. Either then or at some other time he told me that when he heard the French were refusing to allow munitions to go to the Chinese through Tong-king, he had told one of their Ministers that he was not taking a neutral attitude, to which the Minister had replied, “What can I do? Japan says that if we let any munitions through she will go to war, and we have no fleet to defend ourselves with. Will the American fleet defend us?” The President commented, “Of course I could not give such an undertaking”, and added that the situation would be entirely changed if Japan attacked France or England. I said that I fully understood that he could not give any undertaking such as the French had asked for. Nor did it seem to me necessary, provided there were some general acknowledgement that we were engaged in a common adventure. He accepted this, but did not endorse it.

He was having a great battle in Congress, etc., in which he was trying to maintain his general social and economic policy, while making such concessions to “Big Business” as would induce it to co-operate in restoring prosperity. The truth is that the President had carried out almost a revolutionary change, comparable to our Reform Bill of '32. Till he came in, Big Business had, as it were, a veto on any far-reaching change—irrespective of whether the President was Republican or Democrat. It controlled the “machine”. Roosevelt had gone behind the machine and appealed to the people through his broadcasts and by his genius for popularity. He had done this, as most people admit, in order to carry out reforms long overdue. He told me that France and America were, in these respects, twenty years or more behind Britain. He talked of a proposal by a French leader of the Left to visit him, which he did not much welcome, saying that the Frenchman wanted what was right, but must not go too fast. Big Business had replied to his policy by floods of abuse. All, or almost all, the people I met in New York were violently anti-Roosevelt. After we left Washington, the President had a serious tooth-ache, and had to have a tooth out. One woman to whom I sat next at

dinner at New York said her only anxiety was that he might not be suffering enough pain! That no doubt was an extreme case.

A French friend of mine in New York was open-mouthed at the folly of Big Business. If you pressed them, they did not say that the policy of the President was wrong, but they objected to his methods and his untrustworthiness. They knew that they could not defeat his general line. They admitted he had the great mass of the people behind him. So they attacked the mistakes he had made—as, for instance, in nominating to the Supreme Court. Indeed, I can easily believe he made many mistakes. Intellectually he had not got a reasoning mind; he reached his conclusions by pictures. This gave to the average man the impression that he had no settled plan; that impulsively, or for worse motives, he flew from one expedient to another, and did not consult the sober business man who had hitherto been the chief governing factor. He was, no doubt, impulsive, and sometimes almost fantastic. Talking of foreign affairs he sketched an emergency scheme for preventing the outbreak of another World War. When it was threatened, he suggested that he might meet the Prime Ministers or Sovereigns of the Great Powers somewhere where the Press could not get at them, without any attendants, and have a frank and free discussion. He suggested the meeting might be at one of the Azores. I don't suppose he was very serious about this. He evidently had not thought it out. But the picture of such a meeting attracted his imagination. Similarly he said the real form of disarmament would be to forbid the use of any arms which a man could not carry on his back. He would apply the rule even to ships, pointing out what an overwhelming superiority that would give to the British merchant fleet.

It was easy to see that if he talked in that kind of way about the sacred subject of business he would terrify the average business man. And yet his attitude seemed to me an immense relief from the attempts to solve complicated modern problems by references to business experience and the like.

Whether he could have done anything effective for peace is doubtful. I am sure he wanted to do so. He hoped that by demonstrating to Japan, for instance, that she was generally reprobated she might be induced to modify her policy. If not, he repeated to me his phrase about quarantine, saying that he meant exactly what he had said, the peace-loving Powers should not in the last resort shrink from declining to have any further relations with Japan till she abandoned aggression. He said even if she went to war with such Powers it would be essentially a naval war, which he thought America might agree to.

He complained that the British did not say often enough and with sufficient emphasis what they believed about international politics. The

world must be brought to see that aggression was fatal, and that could only be done by constant reiteration.

Some of all this he told me when I saw him again on Sunday before dinner. After dinner there was a film shown, and in the middle the President went down to a lower floor to give one of his fireside talks. He invited us to go and see how it was done. He sat in the corner of a large room with a table before him. Opposite him was a row of apparatus with attendants belonging to the various broadcasting companies. He then read his message. It was on a relatively non-contentious subject—the collection of statistics about unemployment—and he was appealing to the people to help him. The technique was admirable: not too long, very simple, repeating several times exactly what he wanted them to do, but with sufficient variation to prevent its being monotonous. He had a quite admirable voice. It was a large room, and we were at the other end of it. He did not appear to raise his voice, but I heard every word. That was his great instrument against his opponents, by which he convinced the people that he was on their side.

One point more. His instinct for saying the right thing was extraordinary. A man came to see him who had travelled a good deal in Russia. As the talk went on, the President displayed much interest in the extraction of gold in the Russian gold mines. It was unknown to him that the man was one of the most important living authorities on the subject. The President himself told me that in talking to Smuts he had referred to their common Dutch origin. Smuts was immensely pleased, saying it was the first time anyone had spoken appreciatively to him of his race.

The personality of the President was very impressive. He was a very great man, magnificent in resource, and especially in every kind of courage.

While we were in America, the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, definitely declared that the League must be abandoned as an instrument of peace and that the Government were going to rely instead on personal contacts and friendly and frank discussions. Such a policy made a strong appeal to the English, particularly, perhaps, to the commercial class. To them the idea of talking things over, if any differences arose, with rival men of business was familiar. It was "common sense".

As applied to foreign affairs it had two defects. In the first place, neither the Germans nor the Italians were in the least sincere. We now know from the proceedings at Nuremberg that Hitler's attitude as described in *Mein Kampf* represented his constant determination. To recommend to him friendliness and peace was as futile as to advocate vegetarianism to a carnivorous wild beast.

But there was another even more serious objection to the new policy. Any fair reading of the Covenant must have made it clear that it was one of

the fundamental ideas of the League that all its members were bound to stand together in defence of peace. By Article 10 each of them undertook to "respect and *preserve* the political independence and territorial integrity" of the others. It was that Article more than any other that kept the United States out of the League. They were not then prepared to undertake to assist victims of aggression. I remember about 1920 trying to suggest to that great jurist, Senator Elihu Root, who was in favour of American entry into the League, that perhaps the rigidity of Article 10 might be softened. But he would have none of it. The obligation seemed to him perfectly clear and right.

No doubt the actual steps to be taken in defence of peace were not so clearly laid down. There were certain ambiguities in Articles 15 and 16 as to the moment when diplomatic and economic measures were to be merged into military action. But that did not affect the broad principle that if any member of the League were attacked the others were to go to its assistance. When, therefore, our Prime Minister declared that the League could no longer be relied on to keep the peace, he ought to have followed it up by a notice of our intention to withdraw from that institution. We never did that; nor would the common people have accepted that policy. The results of the Peace Ballot showed that the common people were still ready to stand by the League with all the consequences of such a policy.

The truth is that a large section of Conservative opinion was never in favour of the League. As long as it only involved talking about peace at Geneva there was little objection. As soon as it was proposed to go farther than that, and to carry out our obligations under the Covenant in their plain meaning, there was considerable reluctance. The result was what always happens with divided counsels—neither policy was effectively pursued. In the Manchurian question, over Abyssinia, on the military re-occupation of the Rhine Provinces and in dealing with the Fascist assistance to the Franco rebellion in Spain we neither supported the League with all our strength nor did we cast away the League and openly and effectively revert to the old policy of armaments and alliances. Above all, we gave no notice to our colleagues in the League that we should do nothing to help them if they were attacked. Instead of that we insisted on treating the Axis countries as if they accepted our general international views. Distinguished statesmen made a number of brief visits to Germany, where they were easily hoodwinked by the unscrupulous ruffians who then ruled that country. At home, when the Russians, in the spring of 1939, suggested that we should bring the whole situation before the League, they were told that the suggestion was "unacceptable".

Before this occurred, at the end of May, 1938, I went over to Norway

to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, accompanied by Claude Henty as a secretary. We had a very prosperous journey across the North Sea to Oslo, and there I attended a formal meeting at which the presentation was made in the presence of the King and Queen of Norway. I made a speech in reply, taking as my text a passage from the declaration by my father in 1897 (already quoted at page 74) to the effect that the Powers should be brought to act together "until at last they should be welded in some international constitution which shall give to the whole world as a result of their great strength a long spell . . . of continued peace". The British Minister, who was kind enough to entertain me, was at the meeting, and was very much struck by this quotation, and expressed great pleasure that I made it. The rest of the speech was an apologia for the League of Nations, which I still hoped might at the last moment save us from war. But the Scandinavian atmosphere was not encouraging. War was regarded as almost certain. The King very kindly received me and explained his attitude on international affairs. Like all of his subjects that I met, he was anxiously weighing what would be the safest course for his country. Neither he nor they had any illusions as to the danger with which they were threatened by Germany.

Beyond these incidents and a very delightful luncheon with the widow of Dr. Nansen at her home in the country, I did little, returning to England to find the Neville Chamberlain Government almost on the rocks. Part of my prize was a solid Gold Medal. When the war came, I had it copied in plaster of Paris and gave the gold for the relief of Greek suffering in the War.

In March, 1938, Austria was occupied by German troops and its Prime Minister imprisoned. Very specific pledges were given that Czechoslovakia would not be attacked. When it became clear that this pledge, like others, was to be broken, our Prime Minister, with great gallantry—but I must add with a complete misunderstanding of the situation—held repeated conferences with Hitler, which were only prolonged because the German Generals were not quite ready to attack. To me the worst feature of these proceedings was the treatment of Czechoslovakia. Though her future was being settled between German and British Ministers, she was not even asked to attend the conferences, and when heart-rending telephonic appeals were made on behalf of her chief Minister to some of us, we had to reply that we could give no hope that Britain would do anything to help her.

Then, after Hitler had again falsely declared that he meant peace, charges against Poland were trumped up and she was invaded. That was the end. Though our preparations for war were lamentably insufficient, we at last perceived that further pretences of peace would only give the

German war machine further opportunities for increasing her strength, and we went to war.

In the Second World War I took little part. That was not from want of willingness of mine, but simply because there was nothing for me to do. At the beginning of the war there was a meeting in Geneva of the League Assembly, and I offered to attend it. When I made the suggestion to the Foreign Secretary he looked at me with mild surprise, but made no other reply. In fact little was done there except to turn Russia out of the League for invading Finland. No doubt by her invasion she had broken the Covenant, but perhaps some less vigorous way of dealing with the situation might have been found. I next joined one or two committees the object of which was to enable individuals of experience to persuade themselves that they were doing something to help the war. The most effective of them was one under my eldest brother which made various suggestions, but of course could do nothing more. I am afraid I was a rather cantankerous member. I could never forget that the work I had been doing for the past twenty years had failed. No doubt, as is now widely recognised, the failure of the League was due to the want of support it received from its members—particularly from France and England. Still, the fact remained that the Great Experiment in peace-making had not succeeded. This, I am afraid, made me rather peevish. Nor was my temper improved by suggestions that our want of preparedness for war was due to me and the other members of the League of Nations Union. There was no kind of justification for this suggestion, which I think had its origin in the “literature” issued by the Conservative Central Office—not much more truthful in its propaganda than any other Party organisation. An incident to which I have already referred will illustrate the kind of political atmosphere of the moment. I was asked to go and make a war speech in Wiltshire, and agreed to do so. Whereupon the Colonel Blimps of the neighbourhood declared that if I came they would not attend the meeting. It was that kind of spirit that brought about the anti-Conservative landslide of 1945.

This incident did not stand alone, and I therefore became more and more out of touch with official Conservatism. So that I had little to do except to attend the meetings of the House of Lords and the necessarily depressed gatherings of the League of Nations Union, where we could do no more than keep our machinery in being till peace came. One other proposal I did make. I suggested to Churchill that I might bring together a non-Party body of Peers to consider the general lines of international peace. He thought, however, that that would only tend to divert people's minds from the supreme task of winning the war. He may have been right. But I felt that the business of peace-making was going to be very difficult.

In 1919 there was a great conviction not only that war was an intolerable blot on civilisation, but that international peace machinery was a way out. As the League lost vitality and eventually a Second World War broke out, there was grave discouragement, and it would have helped the peoples to endure the horrors of the struggle if it had been known that serious efforts were being made to think out a new organisation for peace. It was obvious that the Government had no time or energy for the task, and that therefore there was room for such a committee as I had suggested. However, *dis aliter visum*, and I did no more in that direction. In the Union we did draw up proposals for an improved Covenant on the lines of the old one. It would have been better if some such plan had been adopted at San Francisco.

There was, of course, some war legislation and a few peace measures which it was thought might be passed even during the war years. Of these perhaps the most important was the Education Act, received with great favour by the experts on the subject. My own feeling was less enthusiastic. I held that the basis of all education of value must be religious teaching and that, though there was a little more recognition of this truth in the new Act than there had been before, the advance was far from sufficient. After all, the experiment in undenominational religion (the Cowper-Temple clause) has now been tried for more than a generation—since 1870. In the result everyone is agreed that Christianity has greatly receded. That may not have been caused by Cowper-Templeism, but that form of religious teaching has failed to stop that tendency. My youngest brother and I therefore tried to insert in the Bill provisions which would encourage the religious teaching in the schools to lead to membership of one or other of the Christian Churches. However, we got little support.

My wife and I soon after the war started, moved our headquarters to the house we had built in Ashdown Forest. Here she lived, and I went down there for most of the time. I offered to one of my neighbours, who, as an old soldier, was active in organising the local Home Guard, to undertake any duty that he thought would be suitable. But for a civilian septuagenarian there was no opening. Ashdown Forest seemed to be on a route frequently taken by German planes on bombing expeditions to London, and if they had not succeeded in dropping their bombs on more important targets they disposed of them in Sussex on their way home. In this way one fell just outside my front door. On another occasion an injured German plane—a Messerschmidt on fire—narrowly missed the house and fell outside the garden, killing its occupants, and there were many other similar incidents in the neighbourhood. No doubt if the Germans ever had invaded the country, or even raided it, they might have occupied the hinterland of Newhaven and Brighton, where we lived. But they never did.

I made one more effort to obtain war employment. I called on Eden, who was then Foreign Secretary. But he was unable to suggest anything —very naturally.

Meanwhile the wife and children of a worker at Woolwich were directed to our house and occupied for a year two or three rooms in it. They added to the work of the household, but were otherwise pleasant lodgers, and have since remained our friends.

So we went on till the war ended. For some reason, probably old age, I never felt the same anxiety about the possibility of defeat that I had felt in the First World War, though I suppose our danger was at least as great as it had been then. But the possibility of an enduring peace seemed even more precarious, though the Great Powers had already announced their intention to set up a new organisation to secure it. Then came the General Election, with a result which certainly surprised me, as it did most other people. I had no vote, but if I had had one I think I must have given it to Labour. The only thing that mattered to me was the preservation of peace, and how could one trust that to a Party many of whom still believed that the policy of the Congress of Vienna was the only possible one to adopt? No doubt there were many others, like Churchill and Eden, who accepted the establishment of an international organisation for the maintenance of peace as essential. But I had seen how the existence of a Blimp section of the Conservatives had helped to kill the League, and I should have been criminal, holding the views I did, if I had done anything to help them to a chance of repeating their action.

I do not know how many of the voters shared these opinions, but no doubt there was a certain number. Probably the main reason for the election result was a feeling that the old Parties had led the country into two wars, and were therefore discredited, and that the great majority of the voters belonged to the working class, and had a right to have their own Government, who would do for them what the landowners and manufacturers had done for their class when they had the power. Some such opinion is likely to remain for some years. It is natural enough, and I do not blame it. I could only wish that it was not regarded as necessary to represent class legislation for the workers as morally superior to similar legislation for any other class.

I am not going to discuss the details of the United Nations Organisation. It is going through a difficult time, and, considering all things, it has achieved a very respectable amount of success. In non-contentious matters it is showing more activity than the League and International Labour Office did, though very good work of that kind was done by those bodies. But in the end it will be judged by success or failure in maintaining peace. In this the fundamental difficulty is, no doubt, the attitude of Russia. At

present she seems determined to use the machinery of the United Nations solely for her own national policy, which favours chaos in Europe as a preliminary to Communism. If that continues, it can only end in the atrophy or destruction of the United Nations or in the erection by the non-Rusian Powers of some secondary organisation of their own. Possibly the very clear and definite decision by the Nuremberg Court that aggressive war is an international crime, coming on the top of decisions to that effect by the League Assembly and other international pronouncements, might be the basis of a special convention obliging the signatories to it to take all measures necessary to suppress aggressive war. I hope very much that a proposal of that kind will be made without undue delay. If and when it is clearly on foot I have no doubt the Soviet Government will seriously reconsider the present position.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, as I write, the urgent problem is how to restore our economic position. On its financial details I have nothing to say. We must trust the experts, sadly reflecting that in the two wars and their sequels they have nearly always been wrong. But, apart from economic niceties, one fact stands out plain. Our exports are not sufficient to enable us to buy all we need from abroad without running into debt.<sup>2</sup> That can only, in the end, be cured by increased production, which means that everyone must, if possible, work harder, or at least more effectively. Is it possible? Are all workers—manual and other—doing their best? It seems agreed that they are not. That is not due to moral obliquity or even shameful idleness. The coal industry is often taken as the crucial case. The production of coal is not nearly enough, nor even as much as it used to be. The reason is perfectly simple. The employers and miners are not working wholeheartedly together.<sup>2</sup> Each section has come to believe that the other is moved by a desire to increase their profits, either in the form of dividends or wages. When, therefore, the miner is asked to get more coal, he believes that it is only that his employers want more money. When the wage-earner asks for better conditions of labour, he is reproached by his employers and their friends with an inordinate desire for amusement. It is thought by many people, including the present Government, that the trouble is caused by the faulty organisation of industry, and that nationalisation is the proper remedy. If the State becomes the sole employer, the workers will understand that any improvement in the profits of industry will not go to shareholders, but to taxpayers, including themselves. Thus runs the argument. But, in actual fact, nationalisation by it-

<sup>1</sup> Some steps on these lines have, in fact, been taken by the peace-loving nations, such as the formation of the Western Union. There have also been important declarations by British statesmen and by the Foreign Minister of Canada, Mr. St. Laurent.

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller discussion of the principles of Co-Partnership see pp. 58 and 159.

self will not make much obvious change in the conditions of labour. The miner will still be doing his allotted job, carrying out some plan arranged by officials as to which he has never been consulted or probably even informed.

"Theirs not to reason why  
Theirs but to do or die"

may be an essential condition of military service—though some commanders do not believe in it even for war—but it is assuredly folly in the organisation of peaceful industry. As I have already insisted, a man is not a machine; he has qualities of mind and will which have enabled him to make those vast changes from primitive existence which we call civilisation. If he is to do his best in industry, these powers must be fully used. Yet in modern mines and factories they are almost ignored. This seems to me the worst evil of our present industrial organisation. Not only is it a fatuous waste of the most valuable resources of man-power, but it unavoidably produces a sense of unfairness and frustration in the minds of those who are so treated. Nationalisation by itself will do nothing to cure this. In those industries which are controlled or owned by the State or some other public authority the conditions of labour in this respect are no better than those in privately owned businesses. The only thing that is necessarily different in a nationalised industry is that the capital is no longer provided by the shareholder, but by the taxpayer, who succeeds to all the rights of appointing managers and directing the plans of work which before belonged to the shareholder. The wage-earner may still remain a mere tool in the hands of his employers. To me this has long appeared to be a monstrous state of things. I cannot imagine why only the man who provides the money—the capital—for the undertaking should be consulted as to the way in which it is carried on, while the man by whose labour the work is done is ignored.

Modern industry, ruled by the principle of the division of labour, must make these conditions still worse to bear. The man whose sole duty it is to ensure the proper working of a bit of machinery which does a tiny fraction of some manufacturing operation must find it very difficult to make any use in his work of those priceless qualities which belong to the human being. The wonder is not that he is sometimes discontented, but that he ever tolerates such an existence. Surely everything possible should be done to alleviate his position, not so much by giving him a little more money as by giving him his full share of responsibility for the whole undertaking. That is the principle of co-partnership. This is not the place to discuss the details of organisation needed to put it into force, of which I have already said something. The point is to use the whole of the faculties of the worker—manual or mental—not only his muscular or his

mechanical skill, but every bit of his energy, his imagination and his judgement, which are at present generally running to waste.

I have repeatedly urged these views in Parliament and elsewhere, and since the war I have more than once pressed them on public notice. Two powerful interests are against them. A considerable number, perhaps most, of the employers regard capacity for business as the exclusive possession of the employing class, which they identify with the owners of capital. The two functions seem to me entirely distinct. Organisation, management, enterprise are no doubt essential for industrial success. But the power to provide capital, whether by the purchase of shares or the payment of taxes, does not by itself endow the shareholder or taxpayer with these qualities. They must be provided by persons who have them and are ready to employ them in the service of each undertaking in co-operation not only with those who subscribe the capital but also with the workers.

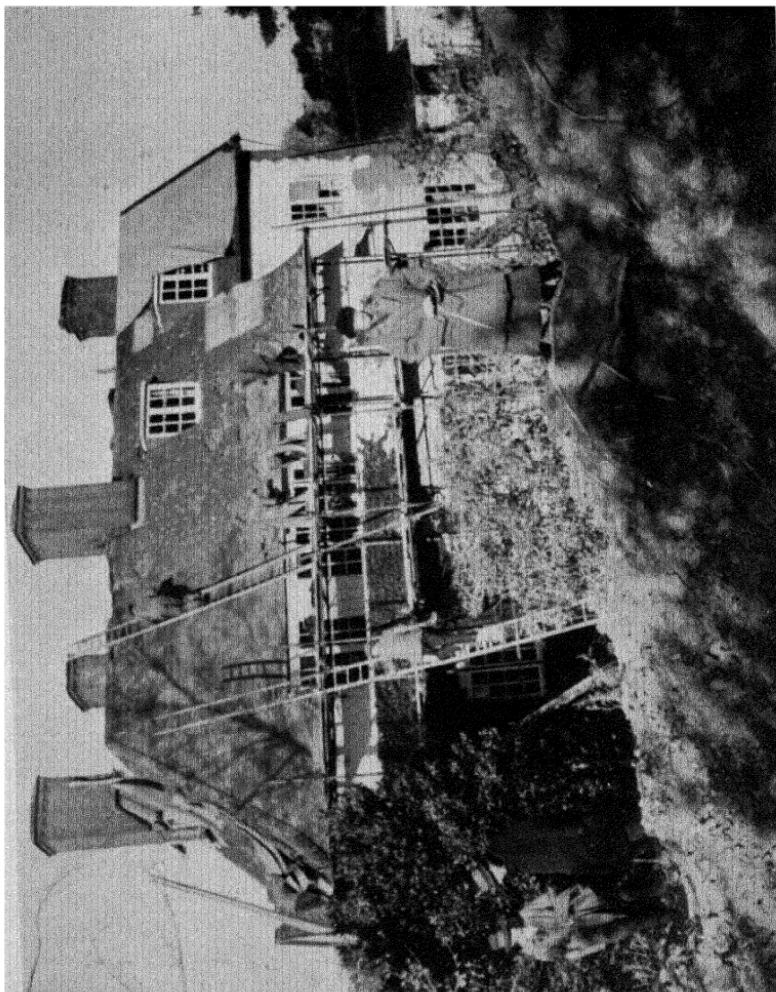
The other and more formidable opponent is the bureaucratic trade-unionist. His business is to organise labour to obtain its rights peacefully, if possible, but if necessary by utilising the organisation to coerce the employers. He therefore wants the organisation to be as strong as possible and not to be split up among separate undertakings. Very natural, but it may be inconsistent with giving the worker a personal interest in and responsibility for the success of the undertaking in which he is engaged. In other words, the trade unionist of this type does not want a worker to think for himself, but merely to do as he is told by his Union, just like the autocratic employer. That point of view is really fatal to industrial progress. It belongs to what ought to be a past conception of industrial life —that division into employers and employed, each section thinking that what benefits one of them must injure the other. It ought to be the first object of all public men to substitute for that idea the conception that there are no “masters” and “men”, but rather a great company working for the good of their country and the happiness of its citizens.

Besides industrial organisation, I have taken part in discussions on such subjects as the greater safety of the roads, where, alas, very little has been accomplished, and greater facilities for the deaf, where there seems more hope. Underlying these and, indeed, all changes, there is the grave question whether our constitutional machinery is capable of performing its functions. On the whole it came through the two wars with wonderful success—better, I think, than the more centralised forms of administration on the Continent. But one cannot help feeling that in the inter-war and post-war years there has been a certain want of conviction and vitality. The common explanation is that we are all suffering from the exhaustion of the war, and that is no doubt true at the present time. But

does it explain the futility of the 1930's? Others urge that the administrative machine is out of gear, and especially that the Cabinet system as at present arranged is no longer adequate. There is much truth in this. A modern Minister must be a superman fully to discharge all the duties thrown upon him. Not only has the detail of departmental work increased enormously, but parliamentary business inside and outside the House of Commons has grown largely with a corresponding development of electoral activity. Moreover, new inventions—like the telephone, the motor-car and the aeroplane—have made possible activities which our ancestors never thought of. Things move far more rapidly, and therefore far more onerously, than they used to.

I have no panacea to suggest for these evils, beyond saying that it looks as if considerable decentralisation must take place which it will be difficult to combine with the movement towards nationalisation which is desired.

But I do not think this is the only administrative difficulty with which we are faced. Some sections of the Government machine are out of date. I have seen most of the Second Chamber. Though many of its historic forms and ceremonies remain, its essence is quite changed. Nowadays it can scarcely be called a legislative body. It can neither effectively promote legislation nor permanently prevent it. All it can do from that point of view is to make criticisms and suggestions which may or may not be accepted by those who control the majority in the House of Commons. If it were to try to insist on proposals unacceptable to the electorate, it would fail. It may be argued that even so it would be better to try, and one can imagine occasions when that might be true. But such an effort would mean something approaching almost to revolution, and the trouble about revolution is that one cannot be sure how it will end. Anyhow, for the time being there is much which the Lords can do without extreme courses. People forget that the main function of Parliament, as its name implies, is to provide for discussion of public questions. In that the Lords can help materially, so that the democracy may be fully informed on important matters. To facilitate their proper discharge of this function, no section of the community capable of contributing to it should be excluded from membership of the House. In particular, I can see no reason for excluding women on the absurd ground that it is only the male view of public affairs that is of any importance, or that women are essentially more disorderly than men. It is the very worst symptom of the political incapacity of the majority of the existing Peers that they wish to exclude from participation in their work half the inhabitants of the country. Other changes might usefully be made to increase the strength of the House, particularly by reversing or modifying the decision excluding Life Peers. It is also for consideration whether Peers who never attend should not be deprived of



GALE—AFTER A BOMB HAD FALLEN IN THE GARDEN—NOV. 7, 1940



their right to sit. At present, with a nominal membership of over eight hundred, attendance rarely exceeds one hundred.

Changes of the nature indicated are strongly opposed on the ground that they would facilitate the "swamping" of the Lords in order to secure their assent to some revolutionary change. That was certainly an argument well worth consideration half a century ago. But nowadays, if it comes to a fight between a democratically supported House of Commons and the House of Lords, it will be quite unnecessary to resort to swamping. That issue was finally settled when the Second Chamber felt unable to resist its degradation by the Parliament Act. "He that fights and runs away may live to fight another day"—but rarely with success. On the other hand, the House of Commons has lost much of the authority it used to possess. We are now governed by the Cabinet oligarchy. In theory the sovereignty of the country resides in the electorate. The problem is how to make such changes in the Second Chamber as will enable it on proper occasion to secure an appeal to the people while preserving its powers of criticism and discussion. I have made suggestions to secure these objects.

I have said something about certain of the main problems that now confront us. Let me repeat that, important as they are, they are all submerged by the overwhelming necessity of maintaining peace. No doubt that in the first line depends on the success or failure of the United Nations. But even that is not the great issue before us. On every side it seems to me that what is threatening the very existence of all that makes life worth living is the question: What are the ideals which are to guide us? Are we to accept the view that the only things that matter are wealth and comfort, amusement and material prosperity—in the modern phrase, dialectical materialism? Or are we to hold to the older view that "man does not *live* by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"?

## CHAPTER VII

### SOME RELIGIOUS TOPICS

IN an earlier part of this book I have referred to the fight to preserve the endowment of the Welsh Church and to secure for parents the right to have their children educated in the religion chosen by them. In both of these struggles I bore a part, and I regret very much that it was unsuccessful. It is said that the Church in Wales is stronger from being impoverished. So we have heard that the blood of martyrs has been the seed of the Church. But I have never been told that that justified the action of a Nero or a Domitian. As for religious education, I have no doubt that the cult of Cowper-Templeism is one of the causes of the emptiness of the churches to-day. Christianity, outside a definite communion, must always have an anaemic life.

These questions have long been quiescent. But another ecclesiastical question of great importance was raised by the rejection in the House of Commons of the new Prayer Book of the Church of England which had been accepted by the constituted authorities of that Church. To meet this difficulty, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York decided, at the wish of the Church Assembly, to set up a Commission to inquire into the relations between Church and State, and I was asked by Archbishop Lang to act as its chairman. The Commission consisted of Archbishop Temple of York, together with two other Bishops and twelve distinguished laymen and myself. It sat at intervals until the autumn of 1935, when it made its Report to the Archbishops. On February 17th, 1936, I made a broadcast explaining what the Commission had done, from which I quote as follows:—

“For some years past much has been said about disorders in the Church of England. By that phrase, no reference is intended to the very rare cases of some moral failure by a clergyman, but rather to the action of a certain group of clergy known originally as Ritualists, and now commonly called Anglo-Catholics. The charge against them is that, in doing the services of the Church, they use ceremonies which are contrary to the rules laid down in the Prayer Book, with the purpose of bringing the ceremonies and, through them, the doctrines of the Church of England into conformity with the Church of Rome. That may be the purpose of some of the Anglo-Catholics, but I think that most of them believe that they are acting as loyal members of the Anglican Church and are trying, by reviving old

traditions, to increase the vigour and reverence of the Church Services. However, that may be, the disputes on the subject have certainly done harm. Accordingly, a great deal of consideration has been given to this subject by Royal Commissions and other similar enquiries. In the course of these discussions the authorities of the Church have become convinced that one great cause of the disorders was that the Prayer Book was framed nearly three hundred years ago and that, inevitably, changes of feeling and even fashion have made it in some respects obsolete. The result of this has been that though by strict law no variations from the Prayer Book are said to be allowed, yet it is not strictly and literally complied with in any Church.

“Almost everyone will agree that it is an unsatisfactory thing to try to tie down rigidly the Church to every syllable that was inserted in the Prayer Book in 1662, and accordingly for a good many years the authorities of the Church, Convocation and so on, were engaged in trying to draw up a new Prayer Book which would, in some respects, give greater liberty. That attempt was rejected by the House of Commons. In rejecting it, the House of Commons was acting within its constitutional rights. But it evidently raised very difficult questions, for the House of Commons consists very largely of persons who are not connected with the Church of England. There are the Scottish Members, for instance, and the Welsh Members now, and the Irish Members—who represent regions of the United Kingdom which have got Churches organised separately from the Church of England and without whose votes the new Prayer Book would not have been defeated. And then there are a large number of Non-Conformists and Roman Catholics in Parliament who are avowedly not members of the Anglican Church. Accordingly, the Archbishops appointed a Commission, of which I was Chairman, to see what, if anything, should be done to give the Church greater liberty in dealing with its own ritual and doctrine. After long and very careful consideration the Commission issued a unanimous report.

“The main recommendation we make is that it would be probably impossible and certainly undesirable to attempt any constitutional change in the organisation of the Church unless there is substantial agreement as to what ought to be done, within the Church itself, and we therefore advise that every effort should be made to reach an agreement. If such an agreement can be reached, the Commission advise that an Act of Parliament should be passed giving to the representative body of the whole Church, which is called the Church Assembly and consists of Bishops, clergy and laity, the right to

decide, with the express assent of the general body of laymen in the country and of the clergy in Convocation, on any question which deals only with such matters as the teaching and the ceremonies of the Church.

"That is our chief proposal, and if it is carried out, the Church will itself be able to make such changes as it may think necessary in its services, and there will then be no excuse for any of its Ministers to disobey its rules.

"We made other recommendations, and one of them is, I believe, of the very utmost importance. Every clergyman, when he comes to be ordained, has to make a declaration in which, among other things, he solemnly undertakes to use only the forms in the Prayer Book and none other, except as permitted by lawful authority. In fact, as I have already said, there is scarcely a clergyman in the Church of England who literally complies with this declaration. No doubt the alterations are made in full good faith. But they are a breach of this declaration as literally construed, unless they are covered by the exception:—'except as far as shall be ordained by lawful authority'; and the question has been raised, and discussed in the Courts, what that exception means. Apparently there is no very clear view as to what it does mean. But to us on the Commission it seemed necessary that in an Episcopal Church—that is, a Church with Bishops—the Bishops must be entitled to allow such changes as had become necessary by the passage of time. A Bishop is primarily the over-seer of the Church, that is, someone who has to regulate it in all matters of doubt. We therefore strongly recommend that, in order to put an end to this great scandal by which clergy solemnly declare that they will never do something which, in point of fact, all of them almost necessarily do, the authorities of the Church should make a formal statement that in their view the declaration I have referred to means that no clergyman is to make any departure from the Prayer Book unless that departure has been authorised by his Bishop, and that no Bishop must authorise any change which does not agree with the general doctrines and teaching of the Church of England. And, as a further safeguard, we have suggested that no change should be made in the services of any particular church unless it is agreeable to the congregation of that church; and unless, if it is a matter of importance, it has been agreed to not only by the Bishop of the Diocese but by the Bishops of the whole Church.

"This part of our Report can be carried out without any change in the law.

“There are other proposals which we make in our Report, which are of a more technical kind. They are all designed to overcome some difficulty in the Church which has led to controversy and so has hindered the great work which it has to do. For instance, in these disputes about ritual and so on, the only direct way in which it is at present possible to deal with them is by taking them before a Court of Law. To our Commission it seemed, first, that certain changes might be made in the way in which the Church Courts were constituted. But besides that we felt that it was a mistake to deal with most of these cases as if they were in the nature of criminal offences to be tried in a Court of Law. They are really differences of opinion leading to breaches of the discipline necessary in any organisation. They ought to be dealt with by the Bishops not as legal matters but rather as matters of administration or organisation.

“There is one other difficulty which, it is said, diminishes the authority of the Bishops. At present the way in which they are appointed is not very satisfactory, though like so many other things in this country, the result has not been so bad as it might have been. In theory, the Bishop of a Diocese is elected by the Chapter—that is, the Clergy of the Cathedral. But they are not allowed to proceed in the election without the permission of the Crown, and the permission is accompanied by the name of the person whom they are to elect. Under the law as it now stands, if they refuse to elect the Crown candidate, they would be subject to very severe penalties. So that in practice the election is a mere farce. Similarly, after the Bishop has been elected, if election it can be called, the Archbishop consecrates him in a very solemn service for the work and office of a Bishop. Nominally, this is the voluntary act of the Archbishop, but by law, if he were to refuse to consecrate, he could be sent to prison. On the Commission, we thought that the Church authorities ought to be allowed to exercise their discretion freely. We are in favour of the nomination of Bishops by the Crown, on the advice of the Prime Minister, as at present. But we think that the Chapter ought to be allowed to reject the Prime Minister’s candidate if they think there is serious objection to him. So, too, we think that if the Archbishop conscientiously refuses to consecrate a Bishop-elect, he ought not to be subject to any penalty.

“Finally, we conclude our Report by an earnest appeal for unity in the Church and for the abandoning of that continual bickering which does so much harm to the main purpose and object for which the Church exists, namely the preaching of the Christian religion, and the morality which depends upon that religion. I notice that

when the question was debated in the Church Assembly, many speakers emphasised that aspect of the matter, and I most heartily and unfeignedly agree with them. The great business of the Church is to preach Christianity; and all these questions and all these difficulties are chiefly of importance in so far as they hinder the Church in discharging that primary duty. It is quite true, and I do not deny it, that many of the disputes which now exist are not matters of the first importance, but that is not the whole point. It is a matter of the first importance that those who are set in the position of teachers should not be driven to disobedience themselves. As the preface to the Prayer Book puts it: 'Although the keeping or omitting of a ceremony in itself considered is a small thing, yet wilful or contemptuous transgression of a common order of discipline is no small offence before God'. That is true; and the Commission earnestly hope and believe that if their recommendations are obeyed, those 'offences before God' may be put an end to by general consent. And we also believe that if the Church be freed from State control in spiritual matters, it will be better able to discharge the duties with which it has been divinely entrusted.'

In August, 1936, a Conference of representatives of various Christian denominations was held at Edinburgh. Archbishop Temple asked me to read a paper explaining, as an ordinary layman of the Anglican Church, what was my religious position. These extracts state its main points:

" . . . Both my father and mother were by conviction sympathisers with the Tractarian movement begun by Keble and Newman and Pusey and that was the religious atmosphere of my home. I suppose it would be now considered Victorian in its great value for reticence and its full acceptance of the command not to cast pearls before swine. For this reason, perhaps, there was an indifference amounting almost to distrust of elaborate ceremonial. The necessity for open self-expression was not admitted, anything like 'ritualism' seemed to be dangerously near insincerity and that was regarded as almost the worst of religious failings. My father was accused of 'blazing indiscretions' in political speeches. It was the same tendency which led to his impatience of all comfortable commonplaces of ecclesiastical teaching whether they took the form of well-meaning religiosity or cast-iron definitions of the indefinable. In like manner, 'modernism' with its attribution of infallibility to scientific theory or to the so-called 'higher criticism' was extremely repugnant to his robust and intellectually non-conformist temperament.

"On the positive side, three features stand out in my religious

## SOME RELIGIOUS TOPICS

education as I remember it. The first was an evangelical insistence on personal and individual responsibility to God. No one, in the popular phrase, must be allowed to come between man and his Maker. For this reason, auricular confession and spiritual direction were disliked apart from extreme cases. Liberty of thought was in principle regarded as absolute. No books were ever forbidden—no questions were ever reprobated. A high Christian standard of conduct and of belief was commended and encouraged, but its rejection or acceptance was from a very early age left to the individual conscience. Whether such a system would be possible except in the hands of parents with very outstanding personalities may be doubtful. But it certainly seems to me in accordance with the fundamental principles of the English Church.

"The other features that I have referred to . . . dealt with religious observance. We were taught to read regularly the Bible and particularly the New Testament. Commentaries, if we wanted them, were open to us, but they were not in any way insisted on. Sermons were treated as a kind of religious luxury. For those who liked them they were excellent. We often went to hear great preachers like Canon Liddon at St. Paul's Cathedral. But if we did not want them, no objection was ever raised to our neglect of them. Indeed, until we had been confirmed it was rather expected that we should 'go out of Church before the Sermon'. On the other hand, the utmost importance was attached after Confirmation to the weekly reception of the Eucharist. . . .

"These, then, remain to me as the three points on which most emphasis was laid in my religious instruction. But of course they assumed acceptance of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. The Nicene Creed in its plain meaning was regarded as essential to the Christian faith and without that faith there could be no true membership of the Church of England. But I do not think it was ever put in quite that way. It was rather said that belief in Christianity was the only vital and essential thing for a man and that the whole of his life must be governed by its supreme authority. In carrying out its guidance each one of us was, as I have said, directly responsible to God and could not share that responsibility with any human agency however holy. Nevertheless, the Catholic and Apostolic Church of the Creed was accepted as the divinely created instrument through which God's Will was to be fulfilled. It ought, in consequence, to receive the reverence and service of all Christians, saving always the overriding authority of God's Word. The particular branch of the Church to which a man belonged, in our case the Anglican Church,

was also entitled to the loyal obedience of all its members in matters of order and ceremonial. But our duty to the Catholic Church as a whole was more insisted on than our duty to the Anglican branch of it. . . .

"I am therefore a member of that Church primarily, no doubt, because I was so brought up. But there are other reasons. Some of them would be its tolerance, or as it is often called, its comprehensiveness, its freedom, its insistence on personal responsibility. Perhaps it is the effect of these characteristics that makes it seem to me one of the least sacerdotal of all the Christian Churches. The priest is an officer of the Church with certain functions. But he is not for that reason the spiritual superior of the laity. The congregation in an Anglican Church is as essential to the due conduct of the service as the Minister. They take their part, whether it be in the prayers or in the Sacrament. In a sense the English Church is the most democratic of all Christian denominations except the Quakers; and this characteristic is strictly in accordance with, may even be said to have been one of the chief elements in, the development of our history.

"Nor is this an irrelevant consideration. We are directed as the only test of the truth or falsehood of religious teaching to watch its results. We are told that a tree is to be judged by its fruits, that a nation which adopts a false religion will suffer for it. If, then, we have grounds for thankfulness in our social and political history, if we rightly rejoice in our freedom, our order, the kindness of our people, may we not regard that as a proof that our Church has not altogether failed in its duty? No doubt it may be reproached with its coldness, its self-complacency, its respectability; and we can see its faults reflected in the lives of our people. I heard a man once described as the friend of all good causes and of some very bad ones. The description might, I think, stand for the whole of the English people. And if we have been taught to befriend good causes, that teaching comes from our Christian Churches and not least from the English Church.

"For, after all, it has a splendid history. It has stood for righteousness since the first days when the English became a nation. Its great ecclesiastics have not often been stained with ambition and avarice, and many of them have been of saintly character and lives. We escaped much of the corruption of the Renaissance. Our Reformation was carried through with the minimum of excess or breach of the continuity of the Church. No doubt grave mistakes were made under the Tudors in the 16th and the Stuarts in the 17th Centuries.

Still, it was to those centuries that we owe the Authorised Version of the Bible and our Prayer Book. Nor should we forget the great Caroline divines and the rescue of the country by their disciples from the slough of hedonism which succeeded the Commonwealth. The 18th Century is generally regarded as the nadir of the Church, but through it all ran a current of vigorous churchmanship of which Samuel Johnson was a striking example. And we should remember with thankfulness that the 18th Century saw the great religious revival begun by John Wesley and continued by the Evangelicals—a revival which reached its climax in the Tractarian movement started by Keble and developed by many others down to the present day. May we not say that English Churchmen are 'citizens of no mean city' and that if there are features in our church life which are far from satisfactory, perhaps the worst is the insufficient loyalty to their Church of the Anglican clergy and laity. It is right not to allow ecclesiastic particularism to obscure our membership of the Catholic Church as a whole. But it is assuredly the height of ingratitude to ignore or undervalue the greatness of the blessing we have received as being members of the Anglican branch of that Church.

"I know that it has its critics. It is thought by some to attach too little importance to Faith and too much to conduct. This is what I have called respectability. I am told it is theologically described as Jacobitism, after the Epistle of St. James. It is said that Protestants are Pauline, Roman Catholics are Petrine, and Anglicans are Jacobites. How persistent is this ecclesiastic passion for dividing Christians into schools owing allegiance to particular teachers! In vain, apparently, was uttered St. Paul's warning on the subject. It may be that our Anglican teachers dwell too little on dogmatic faith. I cannot think that they have emphasised too strongly the necessity for the application of Christian morality to all our activities, national and international. Nor can I see any divergence between the teaching of St. James and that contained, for instance, in the twenty-fifth Chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel or the thirteenth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Moreover, I should not myself say that it is the facet of Christian truth dwelt on by St. James which has been the chief inspiration of Anglicanism. If we are to look especially to any books of the New Testament for that, I should choose the Gospel and Epistles of St. John. That love of their fellow-men is the distinguishing mark of Christians, and that, carried to its highest point, it is one of the chief evidences of the divinity of Christ, these are the sublime truths to which Anglicans cling with passionate conviction.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

THERE is very little to add on the personal side. But there are two or three incidents which I should like to record.

On September 14th, 1944, I became eighty years of age, and my friends of the League of Nations Union were kind enough to renew the congratulations which I had received from them on my seventieth birthday. In this connection I greatly appreciated a letter I received from the then Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. It was in these terms:

"10, Downing Street,  
Whitehall.  
September 1, 1944.

"MY DEAR BOB,

"Many happy returns of your eightieth birthday. It must be a satisfaction to you to see that the great causes of international peace and justice for which you have so faithfully pleaded are now being triumphantly vindicated by the sword.

"This war could easily have been prevented if the League of Nations had been used with courage and loyalty by the associated nations. Even in 1933 and 1936 there was a chance, by making an armed Grand Alliance under the aegis of the League, to hold in subjection the rising furies in Germany or at the very least to enter into armed conflict on terms far more favourable than those eventually forced upon us. We tried our best, and though the road has been one of tragedy and terror, the opportunity will surely be offered again to mankind to guard themselves at least for a few generations from such frightful experiences.

"You may be sure that I shall act in accordance with the spirit and principles of the League, but clothing those principles with the necessary authority.

"You are entitled to mellow reflections even while the storm still rages. Accept my very best wishes.

"Yours very sincerely,  
"WINSTON S. CHURCHILL."

To this letter I thus replied:

## CONCLUSION

*"Chelwood Gate,  
Haywards Heath,  
Sussex,  
5, Sept. 44.*

“My DEAR WINSTON,

“Thank you very much indeed for your letter. It is extremely kind of you to have thought of your old friend in the midst of your tremendous responsibilities. I deeply appreciate it.

“What you say about the League is, I think, quite true. The Governments had agreed to the Covenant without taking it seriously. To them any genuine attempt to apply its provisions against the threatened storm was ‘midsummer madness’. You always saw the realities of the situation. There is a passage in one of your earlier books on the last war in which you visualise a League acting with force against an aggressor. But most people like Baldwin and Macdonald and even, alas, A. J. B., persisted in trusting to vague aspirations for peace. However, largely through you, we have been given another chance and I hope we may be wiser. All depends on whether the Peoples can be made to understand the plain truth of the future and are not led away to put their faith only in social and economic reforms.

“Again thanks,  
“Yours ever,  
“CECIL.”

A little later on the Royal Institute of International Affairs expressed a wish for a bust of myself, which was accordingly executed by Monsieur Charoux. There was a meeting of the Institute to receive the bust. It was presided over by Mr. Lionel Curtis, who was the “only begetter” of the Institute. He described its origin and purpose, and then called on Mr. Winston Churchill, who had very kindly come to the meeting, to present the bust. He said:

“It is to honour Lord Cecil that we have come here to-day, and few eminent citizens of this country more deserve the expression of public approbation, and nowhere should that approbation be more convincingly expressed than here in Chatham House.

“I always think of Lord Cecil as deeply interwoven in the whole story of the League of Nations as well as with its British unofficial assistant, the League of Nations Union.

“Why did the League of Nations fail? It failed for two reasons. First of all because the United States, which had played such a great part in its creation, withdrew, as a result of a popular election, and left

Europe to fend for itself—which it did, after a grisly fashion. The second reason why it failed is the responsibility of leading European Governments in the years between the wars. Even after the United States had withdrawn, there was quite enough force, moral and physical force, to have prevented the arrival at the summit of Germany of a monster, a maniac, against whom all the best instincts of the German people were powerless and whom no restraint could bind. There was time and there was power. It is a mistake to assume at all that the intentions of the founders of the League, or the intentions, above all, of men like Lord Cecil, were pure pacifism. That is not the conception. There has never been a moment when he and those associated with him, whom I see in this Hall, would have espoused any theory of the duty of man which did not include readiness to die, or to send others to die and die with them, for the defence of the great and generous causes of mankind.

“The period between the wars is one of melancholy half decisions and lack of clear views; but from the moment when Mussolini attacked Abyssinia, as far as the League of Nations Union was concerned, they sprang into full activity and were prepared to draw the sword, not in any cause of self-interest or national interest, but to defend the rights of nations and for the establishment of an orderly system of law and government throughout the world. And from that time forward, as we began to work very much more closely together in 1935 and 1936, we found the League of Nations Union and many of the liberal forces, whose peace-loving focus is unchallengeable, working together with a person like me!

“We worked for two things: to get the necessary rearmament of Britain and in the second place to build up a strong, effective band of nations who would confront Nazi Germany with the deterrent of an antagonism which might well cause any nation to pause. And we know well that there were forces in Germany which were struggling to hold back Hitler in his mad career. I do not take the view that there are *Pariah* nations and that all of any great branch of the human family are evil. Do not forget that the Germans twice voted at elections against Hitler by a majority and if there had been a reasonable strength on the part of governments supporting the League of Nations and a clear indication that his methods of violence would not succeed, and that his rearmament would not be allowed, I have no doubt that changes would have taken place in Germany itself which would have had the effect not only of saving the world those horrors through which we have passed but would also have saved Germany from the awful fate which has befallen her. . . .

#### CONCLUSION

“The war came, and with its victorious end came the end of the League of Nations. The League of Nations is gone. ‘Le roi est mort: vive le roi.’ The League of Nations is gone and UNO reigns in its stead. . . .

“These two organisations are really two chapters in the same story. The great work which was performed at Paris and Versailles in 1919 of gathering together all those ideals which had long been in men’s minds in many countries and the presenting of the theory and machinery of the League of Nations, this great work has continued, and UNO is its heir. A stronger body has developed out of the weaker but the ideas and groundwork and foundations are the same.

“And here is one of the principal architects who has laid those foundations, shaped the stones, and guarded with all his strength and ability, to the utmost effort of his life, the cause which they are intended to enshrine. So I say that he must not feel that his life’s work has been interrupted or destroyed by the dispersion of the League of Nations because in UNO he has a more formidable champion which carries forward his ideas and a large part of his inspiration to deal with the anxious problems of our future. . . .”

I replied:

“. . . I am not going to attempt to gild fine gold and repeat the world praises of Mr. Churchill as the great organiser of victory. That is very well-known to us and I should be adding nothing to the knowledge of everyone whatever I said on the subject. But I wonder if he would allow me to remind him and myself of the fact that he is one of my oldest friends. It is more than half a century since I first had the honour of meeting Mr. Churchill. It was at the house of my father at Hatfield and I remember very well his presence and that extraordinary vitality which was even then quite as vigorous as it is now. I remember his playing a game of tennis and dislocating his shoulder. And then I remember. . . . However, I must not go on into all the transactions we have been jointly engaged in, but I must just mention one other and that was an expedition which we made to Birmingham. He went down to speak; I went down to listen. I was just a part of the audience, a super in the performance; but it was a very interesting performance and he advocated the very sternest principles of Free Trade in the very capital of the High Priest of Protection. That was a great moment.

“I see no change in his demeanour or his appearance since those days. He remains youthful. . . . And I look back, as of course all

people of my age do, on the wonderful scene that lies behind me, the immense changes that have taken place, the marvellous sunshine of prosperity that seemed to envelop us all fifty years ago—which is probably quite a mistaken view but still that is the view that you take when you get to be old and think of the years that have passed. And I also am bound to feel some anxiety about the future. I cannot help feeling that we have arrived at a tremendous crisis in the history of this country and, indeed, of the world. A tremendous choice, a tremendous alternative is presented to us. Either we are to have civilisation or anarchy, progress or destruction. I do not think there is any doubt that that choice is offered to us. I suppose it is always offered to all men at all times in a more or less disguised form, but now that choice is offered to us in a blatantly open manner. Unless we can devise some means of avoiding future wars, it does not seem to be very hopeful that civilisation as we know it can continue. And I see no hope except in international collaboration.

“I was interested and delighted to hear what Mr. Churchill said about our first effort at the League, with all of which he knows I entirely agree. And now we have got a new choice, a hope that is even mightier. If international action fails, everything fails. I hear and see a great deal about schemes by which we shall somehow or another harness the new sources of energy so that they will be quite harmless and merely promote progress. That may be all very well in peace-time, but once war breaks out, none of your precautions, however ingenious, however carefully laid, will be worth the paper they are written on. The pressure of war will induce all the belligerents to utilise any weapon that they can find in order to secure for themselves victory. I hope everybody in this country realises that and that the only defence, the only safety we have got is the maintenance of peace. And nothing else will do us any good.

“I see criticisms of the Charter of the United Nations and no doubt it is quite certain to have faults and with some of the criticisms many people will agree. But for my part I am satisfied that, if it is administered, as Mr. Churchill suggested, with goodwill, then it is sufficient to maintain peace. And if goodwill is absent, then no kind of organisation and no kind of Charter will be any use at all in order to maintain peace. Therefore I say to people who criticise this or that provision in it: ‘By all means strive for improvement; but in heaven’s name let us take all we can get and ask for more’. That is the true policy in dealing with these diplomatic documents and, holding that and believing most heartily that that is a possible policy, I am certainly very far from taking a despairing view of the situation. I am

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satisfied that we have every quality that we need in order to succeed, provided we can shew two qualities which we have not always possessed: foresight and precaution. If we can shew those, then we have ample determination and ample vigour in order to carry through this great effort. . . .”

I have quoted what was written and said by the leader of the Conservative Party. It is right, perhaps, to add the following extracts from a speech made by Noel-Baker, who is now one of the Labour Cabinet, when I ceased to be a working President of the United Nations Association:

“Lord Cecil made the League of Nations. He wrote the first minute about it in the Foreign Office in 1916, the first official document in any Chancery which said that a world organisation must be created to prevent another war. That led to the establishment, by his vigorous drive, of the Phillimore Committee. The Phillimore Report was the foundation of all the suggestions which President Wilson was later to produce. In the Foreign Office, in the Cabinet, in the United States, in the Chancelleries of Europe, it was Lord Cecil’s drive which made the foundation of everything that later on was done.

“He made the League in Paris. I was one of the Secretaries who stood behind his chair and watched him do it. And I shall not forget those nights in the Hotel Crillon, after those laborious days in the Supreme Economic Council, trying to bring order back to a war-torn Europe. Where, on every issue, from Article 1 to 26, among the hundred amendments which the delegates brought forth, it was always Lord Cecil who led the debate.

“And he made the League of Nations in Geneva. It was he who brought the paper institution into life. I remember after the first Assembly which lasted six weeks, sitting in the train on our way back, relaxing, Lord Cecil said: ‘Well after all it was not as bad as most people expected. Of course everybody was very stupid about their own affairs, but they were very sensible about other peoples!’ It was by utilising that important and fundamental fact that Lord Robert was able to turn the Assembly from a disordered diplomatic gathering into an ordered, strong parliamentary institution. . . .

“In his own House of Parliament, the Lord Chancellor said about him the other day: ‘It was he who, by his ceaseless advocacy of the principles laid down in the Covenant, gave life to the League and thus provided the body of experience on which the Charter is based’. . . .

"I regard the climax of Lord Cecil's work as having happened not in Geneva, not in the Foreign Office, not in Paris, but in the Peace Ballot in 1935. . . .

"That was a tremendous demonstration of political democratic education. . . ."

It had been agreed at San Francisco that the League should be brought to an end, and accordingly, in the spring of 1946, a final meeting of the Assembly was held at Geneva, which I was invited to attend.

My friend Philip Noel-Baker had become Minister of State in the Labour Government, in charge of League Affairs. He therefore led the British delegation to this Assembly, and my wife and I went with him, flying from Northolt in a most comfortable aeroplane. It was a striking contrast to old journeys to the League. Instead of the twenty hours of train and steamer, with a rather feverish dinner at the Paris P.L.M. station, followed by an all-night and rather shaky journey to Geneva, we sat very comfortably in the plane for a little over three hours. At Geneva we were housed in one of the Lake hotels, where the rooms—well known to me from previous visits—were excellent and the food was like the curate's egg. For several days we attended in the new Palais des Nations at an Assembly which worked hard to prove that it was still alive. The subjects of our debates were the technical arrangements made necessary by the League's decease. They were presided over with great distinction by Carl Hambro, the Norwegian statesman, and the final sittings were addressed by orators representing various nations, including Paul Boncour for France and Philip Noel-Baker for the United Kingdom. I also spoke, and the chief theme of our speeches was that the League was more sinned against than sinning, that the powers given to it by the Covenant were adequate for the maintenance of peace, that the majority of those who attended its meetings, led by such men as Nansen, Benes, Politis, Briand and earlier by Balfour and Bourgeois, honestly tried their best, and could have succeeded in their task had they been supported by the Governments of the Great Powers, including both Britain and France. It was not a very cheerful occasion. The Hall was only partly full, and the memories of all that the League had done and had reasonably hoped to do made one doubtful about the success of the new organisation. Nor could we forget that a second failure would almost certainly mean the destruction of civilisation. Still, we put as bold a face as we could on our prospects, and I ended my observations by the phrase: "The League is dead; long live the United Nations".

That was the end of my active public life. What, then, are the chief impressions that remain?

## CONCLUSION

In a speech in a Foreign Policy debate on June 11th, 1947, Lord Vansittart said:

“It almost breaks my heart when I think that I started life in a world inhabited by hope and am ending it in one inhabited by doubt of its own duration.”

A striking phrase! With the first part of it I agree. I may be said to have started life about 1870—the middle of Queen Victoria’s reign. The atmosphere was one of immense confidence. The preceding generation had been very prosperous. That and other things had created a sense of complete security. Since 1832 we had been advancing towards democracy by very cautious steps. We were the richest country in the world, we dominated the sea, we had an “Empire on which the sun never set”, our historic rival—France—had ceased to be our enemy and only the most long-sighted observers thought that the rise of Germany was a serious danger to Great Britain. Earlier hopes and fears about the disruption of the Empire were subsiding. India had apparently recovered from the Mutiny, Ireland was relatively quiescent and Home Rule a distant phantom. The Colonies, as they were then called, seemed content and the talk of separation did not advance. The great religious movement, which began with John Wesley’s marvellous work, had been followed first by the Evangelicals and then by the Tractarians. There had been a period in which the position of the Anglican Church had seemed shaken, but that had abated, and though some wondered whether the Ritualists were the advance guard of Rome, yet, on the whole, Protestant Christianity seemed in a stronger position here than it had ever been. Certainly, so far as church and chapel-going were concerned, the position was far more satisfactory than it is now. In an ordinary country house party, for instance, it was normal for the guests to go to church at least once on a Sunday. Perhaps, however, that was more a question of fashion than conviction.

Politically, too, the position was fairly serene. There had been no fundamental disturbance of it since the Great Reform Bill. The land-owning class had been to some extent replaced by the manufacturers and financiers, especially in the large towns. But the Whigs under Palmerston and Russell were not revolutionary, and even the Radicals, under such men as Bright and Cobden, were not in favour of fundamental economic changes, apart from Free Trade. Indeed, such social reforms as were carried were at least as much due to Conservative philanthropists, like Shaftesbury, as they were to any impulse from the Left.

In a word, my first years were passed during the height of Victorianism. Looking back on it, one of the things that strikes one is that socially

the changes from the eighteenth century had not been great. The society described by Miss Austen was not very different from that of the Anthony Trollope novels. Lady Catherine de Bourgh was no doubt a horrible woman and Lady Glencora was charming. But their outlook on life was nearly the same. The social world was divided into those who were gentlemen and those who were not. It is noticeable that, in the quarrel between Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Elizabeth Bennet, the former admits that Elizabeth's father, being a landowner, was a gentleman, but draws the line at her mother. Roughly, the same class distinction will be observed in Trollope's novels and even in Disraeli's. In the eighteenth century the whole power of Parliament had been in the hands of the landowners. They dominated the Lower House as well as the House of Lords. In the younger Pitt's first Cabinet he was the only Commoner, and even he was the son of a Peer. The Reform Act of 1832 modified that arrangement politically. But it did not make any sweeping change socially.

Hatfield, where I was brought up, was the house of a great landowner and one of the social centres of the county. I was not encouraged to boast of this or, indeed, much to value it. My father definitely disliked it, and was never so happy as when he escaped with his family to a villa in Normandy or, later on, to the South of France. But in Hertfordshire he continued to discharge the duties which he had inherited. He was an industrious and generous landlord, popular with his tenants, for some time Chairman of Quarter Sessions, and hospitable to his neighbours. Hatfield House was—and is—imposing architecturally. Outside it has suffered few changes from the time, more than three centuries ago, when it was built by the Minister of James I. In 1835 its west wing was burnt down, but care was taken to rebuild it with the same bricks. Inside, greater changes had been made to satisfy the ideas of comfort of those who lived in it. But, judged by modern standards, it was not, when I first knew it, luxurious. There were only two fixed baths in the house, and neither of them would be regarded as of a tolerable kind nowadays. Owing to my father's intense dislike of tobacco, smoking was not allowed in the house, except in one small room constructed for the purpose and furnished with rather uncomfortable chairs, covered with shiny brown leather. Even this was regarded as a concession to modern ideas. In the previous Lord's time, smokers could only indulge their taste in the basement.

As for food, there was always plenty of it, and wine to drink with it, which was sound enough, but not wonderful. The cooking was not good because, I think, no one cared enough about it to supervise it properly. Many of the rooms were splendid. But the furniture and decorations were not, generally speaking, equal to the structure, though there were some beautiful and many interesting things in it. Nor was the manner of life

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ostentatious. There were a good many horses, and my brothers and sisters and I rode and drove them. But as far as I was concerned, more as a hygienic duty than as a pleasure. The shooting was moderate and there was little fishing. On the other hand, there was a real tennis-court, with a marker, in which we played tennis and a sort of lawn tennis, using soft balls, and, as I have already said, there was a great deal of entertaining, including formal balls and informal dances, but no gambling or theatricals, nor much music. Apart from our family life, which was always very intimate and united, the main characteristics of Hatfield, like those of England, were security and comfort. My father was much interested in the Great French Revolution and had collected a number of books on the subject. One of the regular family phrases was "When the Revolution comes!" but I don't think any of us much believed in it.

In home politics, the old division between Whig and Tory still persisted. Often there were in the country Party fights on domestic questions. But on the whole the common people were content to leave the government of the country in the hands of the richer classes. In external affairs there were no great Party divergencies in the early seventies. After the Franco-German War Europe was, on the whole, quiet. Apart from the establishment of a Republic in France and of the new Empire of Germany which resulted from that war, there had been no great changes for many years. Generally speaking, Europe was monarchical. Russia, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Turkey, as well as the smaller States other than Switzerland, were so governed, nor did any profound change seem likely, except that many looked for a royalist restoration in France.

Abroad, then, no less than at home the years of my early life were passed in a peaceful atmosphere. No doubt there were many evils. But they had not become so obvious and urgent as to compel violent and subversive change. That does not mean that we as a family just enjoyed idle and self-indulgent lives. I think it fair to say that from our earliest youth we were taught a Longfellow view of life. Each of the boys was encouraged to choose for himself a profession and most, if not all, of them did so. The point is not that we did not have a comfortable and sheltered existence, but we were taught to recognise the old tradition, coming down, perhaps, from feudal times, and we enjoyed these advantages in exchange for a duty to serve our country and our fellow-men to the best of our power.

In politics I was an acquiescent Conservative, accepting my father's political opinions and actions as evidently and supremely right.

This state of things continued till I went into Parliament in 1905. But my father's death in 1903, coinciding as it did with the beginning of the Tariff Reform agitation, ended the first political chapter of my life. Even

before that, the Boer War had been a great shake to me. And when I became a Member of the House of Commons I felt more and more that all that was best in the Tory position, all that was meant by the old toast of Church and King, was being submerged in what seemed a rather sordid attempt to ally Imperialism with State assistance for the rich. I often thought even then that I was more in agreement with people like Edward Grey than I was with many in my own Party. Nevertheless, Home Rule still seemed to me a surrender to crime and outrage. I still thought the Disendowment of the Welsh Church quite indefensible, as, indeed, I do to this day. I was uneasy about religious education. I was therefore content to oppose the Liberals, though I was anxious and doubtful about the ultimate political future.

Though the Conservatives had been heavily defeated in 1905, there was no great social change in consequence. But politically, the influence of the landowners was diminished. They accepted, perhaps unfortunately, alliance with the employers. There were still some men representing the old point of view. But there were not many. In consequence, everything tended to be commercialised. Cricket became an affair of averages. In football, eminent players were being bought by wealthy clubs, as they still are. Horses were superseded by motor-cars. It was reported that Joseph Chamberlain declared that landowners were of no importance, it was the large employers of labour who possessed the electoral influence. The "capitalist" class had, for the time, the chief power.

So I continued, during the next nine years, working at my political duties and became not a great orator—I never was that—but a fairly effective debater and an industrious Parliamentarian. Then came the First World War. I did not foresee it. I did, indeed, in the preceding years, come to distrust German policy, and I advocated greater preparedness for ourselves. But I clung to the belief that when it came to the point no one would be so mad as to plunge the world into what I knew and said would be an "orgy of lust and cruelty".

Indeed, so it was—only far worse than I had imagined it would be. From that time my whole point of view changed. As the weeks went on the slaughter and suffering increased. Perhaps because the experience was new, there seemed to be a destruction of all that was best in the generation that fought then more complete than there was even in the Second World War. However that may be, I increasingly felt that there were only two public objects worth while. One was to do everything possible to secure victory as soon as possible, and the other was to work for lasting peace when the war was over. Accordingly, in the first Coalition Government I accepted office as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, which turned out in practice to mean chiefly the administration of economic warfare—

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then known as the “blockade”. That lasted from the summer of 1915 to the autumn of 1916, and was my happiest experience of office. For I found myself in full sympathy with my immediate chief—Grey—and almost as much so with the Prime Minister—Asquith. At the end of that period came the second Coalition under Lloyd George, with Balfour as Foreign Minister. Just before that happened I had put on paper my first sketch of the League of Nations, and it was then being considered by a Foreign Office Committee under the first Lord Phillimore. Thenceforward, to work for the creation and efficiency of the League was the chief object of my life. I retained my office in the new Government. As far as the Foreign Secretary was concerned, the change from Grey to Balfour did not affect me very much. I had no difficulties in my work with Balfour. With the new Prime Minister my blockade work went on unchanged and without criticism from him. I admired him greatly, and in many ways liked him very much. His sense of humour, his quickness, his political courage and complete freedom from official pomposity were very attractive. True, he did not care much about the League at first, but while the war lasted there was not much to be done about it. It was after Smuts wrote his brilliant pamphlet in support of the idea that the Prime Minister began to take notice of the subject. Apart from this, somehow I never felt quite at ease with him. The office of Prime Minister is very difficult to fill. In addition to all the burden of policy and administration, there are constant personal problems to solve. I remember when my father abandoned the Foreign Office in order to devote himself to the Premiership, he used to say that he had changed from the larger to the smaller diplomacy! And it is not only the business of appeasing the injured feelings and vanity of his colleagues that a Prime Minister has to struggle with. To many men the more painful task is to conciliate loyalty to his subordinates with the interests of the public service. How long is an old friend to be maintained in office who turns out not to be quite up to his job? Disloyalty to his colleagues is unforgivable in a Prime Minister, but kindness of heart sometimes does more harm. It may be that Lloyd George was more sensitive to the second danger than the first. At least by contrast with Asquith it seemed so to me, and gave me a feeling of discomfort. It is only right to add that, as far as I personally was concerned, I have nothing but gratitude for the kindness with which I was treated.

Certainly it would be quite wrong to make Lloyd George responsible for the great social changes which followed World War I. They were the result of the financial measures necessary to pay for the war. There was a talk about a capital levy for the purpose. But that was strongly resisted and dropped. Nevertheless the war expenditure had to be made good, and that could only be done out of the pockets of the taxpayer.

It makes little difference whether the necessary contribution for the purpose is called an income tax or a capital levy, it equally reduces the resources of those who pay it. The results were soon obvious in the case of the landowners. Their receipts from the land remained the same, but the proportion of them taken in taxation was immensely greater than it was before the war. Their own expenditure had to be severely cut down. It became the fashion to talk of the "new poor". Many of the large country houses had to be either closed or the expenditure connected with them had to be severely restricted. The social and political position of the land-owners necessarily diminished. The leadership of the Conservative Party passed to men belonging to the employing class, like Bonar Law, Baldwin and the Chamberlains. The Liberal Party, disrupted by the controversy between Asquith and Lloyd George, rapidly declined in political power, and its place as chief Opposition Party was taken by Labour. It was the beginning of what turned out to be a political revolution, carried out without fighting or bloodshed. The process was spread over several years, and required another World War to complete it. But the immediate alteration of the conditions which prevailed from those which existed when I first got into Parliament in 1905 were far-reaching.

My position became increasingly ambiguous. The social and political changes, though doubtless inevitable, were unsettling. Most of those affected by them were my friends and relations. They had their faults, but I knew they had also their virtues. They had willingly borne tremendous sacrifices during the war. They had deserved well of their country, and yet their powers and position had been very largely taken from them. They naturally hoped to revive the pre-war conditions, and distrusted novelties. To them, therefore, such a new-fangled scheme as the League of Nations was unattractive. Their military and naval connections, as close as they were honourable, increased this tendency. In spite of the efforts of advocates of the League to prevent it falling into Party politics, its supporters commonly belonged to the Parties of the Left.

When, therefore, I joined the Conservative Government in 1923, I was really in a false position. All my past political history before the war of 1914 had been Conservative. But after 1916 domestic political questions appeared to me of small importance, and I was prepared to see, without regret, the success of any Party which would make the maintenance of peace through the League its chief object. That was not the view of most of my Conservative colleagues, nor was it the policy of the Party. The farthest they would go in my direction was approval of peace and a rather sceptical support of the League. Baldwin's attitude on the subject represented, as he so often did, the general Conservative feeling. He certainly liked the idea of the League, but he stood aloof from it. For instance, he

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never came to Geneva to see how it worked, even though he was in the habit of spending part of his holiday a few miles away in Savoy. He was there during the Corfu crisis, and I drove over to see him at Annecy. He was very friendly, but obviously had not any opinion on the subject, except that I must be careful not to risk any action that might lead to a break with Italy. The consequence of this general attitude was that I was continually harassed and frequently on the verge of resignation. On the Corfu question I was fairly satisfied with the policy pursued, except for the final intervention in favour of Italy by the Foreign Office. But later in the year I was again in trouble with my colleagues over the Ruhr question, as I have described.<sup>1</sup>

During the first Labour Government of 1924 I found myself again at issue with my Party over the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, as I have told, and in the next Conservative Government I disagreed with the Cabinet strongly over the Protocol and the fumbling—or worse—about the admission of Germany to the League. Finally came the controversy over the cruiser question with the United States, which forced me, as I thought, to a final political severance from the official Conservatives. It is true that the issue in this last case was not directly concerned with the League. But it raised a similar question. To me it seemed of the highest importance in the interests of peace that we should avoid quarrels with America, particularly on the question of armaments. Only by co-operation with her could there be any effective international action for peace. Her Government had shown signs of being less anti-League than at first, and it would have been madness to drive her back into isolationism. As my colleagues did not take the same view, my only resource was resignation.

From that time forward I was never in office, nor did I take any direct part in Party politics. The second chapter in my life had definitely closed. I was no longer a Conservative politician. Peace had become my political object. I strove to strengthen the League as far as I could, and watched with growing depression and anxiety the successive acts of the British Government belittling its influence over China and Japan, over Abyssinia and Spain, over Austria and the Rhine and not least over disarmament, until we again drifted into what has been well described as an unnecessary war.

Anyone who compares the atmosphere of serene confidence in which I lived in the 1870's with the doubts and anxieties of the present time must agree that the transition is very great—in everything but name a revolution. No wonder that through the inter-war years I was politically restless and disturbed. I had lost belief in my Party and its leaders. They

<sup>1</sup> See p. 178.

seemed to me to be making no real effort to establish a solid peace. They just drifted from one difficulty to another, devising temporary palliatives, but no cures. Even the warning of the First World War was insufficient to make them realise the fearful dangers that threatened us. The one chance of safety, as I thought, was to be found in ungrudging support of the League of Nations. Tepid and dilettante approval was useless. To prevent future war was at the best a difficult and doubtful enterprise, which could only succeed by a tremendous effort. If they had boldly rejected the League and thrown themselves into the old expedient of building up armies and alliances, their attitude would have been intelligible. But they did nothing in that direction. On the contrary, financial pressure compelled some reduction of our military budget. Not that such steps as were taken to diminish our expenditure on armaments was in any sense part of a League policy. There is nothing in the Covenant of the League which favours unilateral disarmament. General international reduction and limitation of armaments is recommended, but that is quite another thing. The Government's hesitating steps towards national disarmament were solely due to a desire to save money. It was no part of a policy of international disarmament. There were two possible policies. Either the League, the whole League and nothing but the League, or else a reversion to the old ideas of armaments and alliances and the balance of power. Unfortunately the inter-war Governments adopted neither.

Now we are face to face with a situation of grave peril. I do not mean that there is a definite prospect of another war in the near future. Mere exhaustion will prevent that. But sooner or later that mood will pass. The power of the human being to forget suffering is boundless. Moreover, as the years go on, a new generation will arise, whose personal knowledge of the Second World War and its economic and political consequences will be indistinct. Unless by then we have really destroyed war as an instrument of policy there is no reasonable hope for the survival of civilisation as we and our fathers have known it. It is not only a question of defending ourselves against the atomic bomb or any more powerful devilry that may be invented. Another war such as that we have just gone through will be quite enough for the purpose. The essential fact of the situation is that peace, in the plainest and simplest meaning of that word, is vital to our existence. Under modern conditions, victory is not enough.

Can we secure peace? And, first of all, do we really desire it? A mere anaemic preference for peace is perfectly useless. We must be ready to make any sacrifice of our prejudices, nay, more, of our traditions, in order to secure our end. And our end is quite simple. We have got to make aggressive war impossible. We are all aware of the urge towards a United

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States of Europe, with a central government dealing with defence and other foreign affairs. In principle, I have no objection, provided it does not develop into an Eastern and a Western Europe; for that would be, in practice, indistinguishable from the old policy of a balance of power. It could only mean two or more groups of States, potentially enemies, and therefore chiefly concerned in building up competitive armaments. The way to avoid that danger is to take care that any international federation is fundamentally universal. In other words, any partial federation must be subject to control by a world international organisation. Whether even a partial federation is practicable depends on the state of public opinion in the various countries. I should be afraid that at present we are far away from anything like a federalised Europe. This is not an opinion based only on estimates. We have seen more than one experiment in the federal direction which has had to be abandoned. At one time there seemed a prospect of a federal Scandinavia. But, in fact, the relatively recent changes in that part of the world have been in the opposite direction. Norway was united with Sweden and is now separated. Iceland has demanded separation from Denmark. And though consultations between the Scandinavian Powers have been frequent, any suggestion of a joint government, or even of a joint policy, has always been rejected. They have been quite good friends with one another and, it may be, would welcome similar friendships with some or all of the smaller Baltic Powers, but nothing more than that. Similarly, there was a movement a few years ago towards closer union between the Balkan countries. It may yet come to pass, but at present their national relations can scarcely be called more than diplomatically friendly—that is, not definitely hostile, and not always that.

A more important effort was made in the case of the British Commonwealth. That was started with the immense advantage of personal union through the King. But all attempts to convert that into a Commonwealth Constitution have been firmly rejected. I was concerned with a certain number of other enthusiasts for the idea, led by the late Lord Milner and Mr. Lionel Curtis. As long as we were busied with theoretical discussions and the drafting of Commonwealth Constitutions, all went well. But as soon as the scheme began to emerge into practical proposals it was found that the plan had only a moderate support in this country and little or none in the Dominions. Perhaps that may not always be so. But at present that is the position, and I doubt if it would be improved if the United Kingdom became one of the Powers in a Federated Europe—rather the reverse.

Apart from the difficulties created by our Imperial position, I cannot believe that Russia would, in present circumstances, join in any federal

plan. And if not, might that not mean a split into two Europes, which, as I have already contended, would be fatal? Even more serious are the difficulties connected with America. I do not think that she would come into such a federation. Nor do I think that, if she remained outside, our present very friendly relations with her would be maintained. They depend on the fact that we occupy in Europe a more or less independent position, so that friendship and collaboration with us does not involve any direct responsibility for any other European country. It was an exaggerated anxiety to avoid that responsibility which kept America out of the League. That she should have accepted membership of the United Nations is an immense gain to the cause of peace. We ought to take the greatest care to avoid any steps which might make her regret her recent international action.

Though I see insurmountable objections at present to anything like Federal Union, that does not mean that I regard the present position of the United Nations as satisfactory. The main difficulty is, no doubt, with regard to the Veto. Perhaps it is misleading to talk of vetoes. The Charter does not say that any of the Permanent Members of the Security Council can forbid action by it. What it says is that no action shall be taken on any question other than one of procedure unless the Permanent Powers are unanimously in favour of it. If that had been expressly confined to military action, there would have been a good deal to be said in its favour. Certainly there are many cases in which the dissent of one of these Powers would make forcible international action very difficult. That is true, for instance, about naval action opposed by the British Commonwealth, or military action in Eastern Europe against Soviet wishes. So is it of action in America without the United States or in East Asia without China. The same problem met the framers of the League Covenant. Indeed, the difficulty was even more acute then than it is now. For the maxim that a Sovereign State is internationally independent was then universally accepted. The most damaging charge at that time against the conception of the League was that it was an attempt to set up a Super-State. It was urged, I remember, that it was going too far to say that a resort to war in breach of the Covenant of the League should *ipso facto* amount to the creation of a state of war between the Covenant-breaking State and the other members of the League. It was therefore provided that such action should be regarded as an act of war against the other members of the League, who each of them bound themselves to take whatever action was necessary in order to prevent or arrest the aggression. In that way the political independence of each State was respected, but its moral duty to stop aggression was enforced. I think that was a better solution of the difficulty than that attempted at San Francisco because I think it was more

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in accordance with the actual facts of the case. There is no means to compel a State to go to war against what it thinks to be right. If it had been made clear that that was all that was meant by the voting clauses in the Charter, not much harm would have been done. But to set up elaborate machinery for the use of force in support of the Charter and then to say that that is not to be employed against a Great Power is bound to produce a deplorable impression, especially when it is remembered that it is only the wrong-doing of a Great Power that can bring about a World War.

What, then, should be done? I doubt if amendment of the Charter is the right solution. Technically there would be great difficulties. Nor, for the reasons already given, would the creation of a European Region under the Charter—another form of the United States of Europe—be an effective remedy. Economic and social progress may well be, in many cases, promoted by regional action. But the maintenance of peace is a world interest. “Peace is indivisible.” What we want is some world action which would not involve any break-away from the Charter and yet would be free from the hampering conditions of the voting machinery of that instrument.

In other words, what is required is the enforcement of the doctrine so admirably laid down in the Nuremberg Judgment that aggressive war is an international crime. I understand that the Assembly has endorsed that doctrine, though not in a very challenging way. It has, however, referred the matter to a Codification Committee, with a recommendation to deal in priority with this point. That is excellent provided it does not mean long delay. I should like to see a very brief Convention drawn up, based as simply as possible on the criminal nature of aggression and requiring all parties to it to take whatever action may be necessary, including the use of their naval, military and air forces, to put a stop to any crime of that nature. I would not attempt to interfere with action by the Security Council, either by way of limitation or extension. Let that be left entirely as it is. In addition, by the proposed Convention there would be laid on all signatories of it an absolute duty to take whatever steps were practical and effective to prevent and arrest aggression—following the precedent of the Covenant rather than the Charter. It would be ancillary to the Charter, and not in substitution for it.<sup>1</sup>

It may perhaps be asked whether such a plan would be accepted and acted upon. I must reply that no plan can succeed unless the parties to it choose. It is conceivable that the world is doomed to drift along for another twenty or thirty years to another catastrophe, leading, as I think it must, to chaos. If it does, it will be in the teeth of the passionate desires of the immense majority of mankind. Is it really true that what almost

<sup>1</sup> Possibly the Western Union may develop along these lines.

everyone desires is unattainable? We all hate war. We all long for peace. We know by experience that the most precarious peace is better than war, that to begin war is definitely and literally a crime, a defiance of the spiritual nature of man. If that opinion is honestly held, then surely war can be abolished. Nothing less than abolition is of any avail. That it is easy of attainment I do not believe. I do not think it will be the result of ingenious political manoeuvres or of decorous diplomatic platitudes. Least of all do I look with any hope to the "dialectical materialism" of the Soviet or the crude nationalism of the Nazis. There must be a general recognition that the spiritual side of man's nature is just as real as the physical side, and infinitely more important. The principle of war, which is an appeal to brute force, to the animal instincts of man, is inconsistent with his spiritual nature. It can only be abolished by acceptance of Christian doctrine and Christian morality. Whether that can be achieved, and if so by what means, is not within the scope of this book. But I see no other complete solution possible.

## APPENDIX

I VENTURE to add, as an appendix, a paper I drew up in 1931 as a commentary on Briand's then proposal for a European Committee. With the substitution of "United Nations" for "League", it still expresses my view:

"Monsieur Briand is right. There *is* a certain Commonwealth of Europe. Neither the growing pre-occupation of European Powers with their dominions or colonies overseas, nor the world-wide connections of European trade, nor yet the traditional hostilities of the Continental nations have destroyed that fact. The unity of Europe, beclouded as it certainly is by the smoke of the Great War and the jarring of the new nationalisms, remains something which, until twenty years ago, no educated man was inclined to question. History, indeed, is full of schemes for European Federation, from the day when the Holy Roman Empire ceased to be a political reality until the Concert of Europe, which the late Lord Salisbury defended in 1897 as 'the embryo of the only possible structure of Europe which can save civilisation from the desolating effects of a disastrous war'.<sup>1</sup> Europe's internal quarrels were neither less real nor less acute than family quarrels can be. But they remained family quarrels, deplorable and essentially unnatural. Even Napoleon declared that every European war was a civil war. The Great War seemed to destroy this unspoken but underlying loyalty; and there is no scarcity of public men both in Monsieur Briand's own country and outside it, who speak and act upon the assumption that it did so. They are wrong. For the unity of Europe depends upon deep underlying facts of race and culture which no single catastrophe could destroy. The manifold reconciliations which have illumined the darkness of the post-war period; the intellectual heroism which has already rebuilt so many of our broken bridges; the success of the League of Nations—almost miraculous if contrasted with the violent hatreds of the belligerents only eleven years ago—all bear testimony to this truth. I agree with Monsieur Briand that there is a 'common feeling' in Europe. And it is of great importance that this corporate sense should be developed and used to buttress and reinforce the new institution for the organisation of world peace, which the League is, bringing to it that

<sup>1</sup> In a speech in the House of Lords on March 19th, 1897, Lord Salisbury said: "It is our duty to sustain the federated action of Europe (the Concert of Europe) . . . our sole hope of escaping from the constant terror and the calamity of war".

vividness of common feeling which must to some extent be lacking in a body which embraces all quarters of the world.

“‘European’, then, is no mere geographical expression; it is an epithet which does denote a common mind. That is the first truth, for those to grasp who would form a just appreciation of Monsieur Briand’s plan for a Federal Constitution of Europe. The second is that it comes to us from a statesman who has shewn on many occasions that he is a convinced and ardent advocate of peace. Many defects of detail can be forgiven in a political project whose author’s character and intention command respect. . . .

“My third consideration is that Monsieur Briand’s intervention is singularly opportune. I think no qualified observer would deny that the League of Nations is passing through a difficult time to-day, or that the current of the peace movement has slackened. . . .

“I think that this relatively dull and dispiriting period in the peace movement was bound to come. We are receding from the Great War, the reaction from it has largely worked itself out. More pressing political causes have taken the place of what, in the minds of most serious men and women both in Europe and America, was the dominant thought some years ago, the necessity of creating international institutions which should save the world from war. But are lassitude and oblivion the only causes? Monsieur Briand has put his finger on another. And that is that Europe’s internal divisions are very seriously regarding the organisation of peace and the progress of international co-operation in the world as a whole. Where Europe should give a good example, Europe too often is a stumbling block; this Europe which has been, can be and ought to be united, is divided. . . .

“It is, however, more than doubtful whether the time is yet ripe for a Federal Constitution of Europe such as the Constitution of the United States of America or of the Commonwealth of Australia. Indeed, what, as I understand it, Monsieur Briand proposes is no more than a half-way house to this ideal. The differences of race, language, religion and political tradition are too great in Europe for any swift and sensational transformation of the Continent into a political unit. The evil inheritance of history cannot be set aside in a moment. Nor are these the only difficulties. European unity and prosperity are not ends in themselves. ‘Europe contra Mundum’ would be as formidable a menace to peace as is the rivalry of nation with nation. To exchange the hostility of countries for that of continents would be no gain for peace—quite the contrary. Even if such rivalry went no further than the economic sphere, it would be for-

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midable enough. A European Zollverein surrounded by the usual tariff wall might be a danger to the world. Moreover, there is a great advantage in the practice of associating disinterested nations of other continents—Canada or Japan; for instance—in the solution even of purely European differences. . . . Their suggestions may be affected by their interests, and in any case, if the outside nations do no more, they at least perform the functions of an international jury. Nothing must be done to undermine the solidarity of all continents in the work of peace-making. To remove the subject matter of important international decisions from the Council to a European Conference or Executive would be to destroy the League. And Europe would not be saved from the ruins. That is why I am convinced that Monsieur Briand's intention of assisting the League of Nations by his project will best be attained not by creating something having at the start an independent life of its own, but by developing machinery with the same purpose as an integral part of the League's organism.

“One thing at least is clear, and that is that no British Government could enter a European system which has any appearance of being a continental bloc in potential antagonism to other continental or international groups; and that can only be effectively prevented by its incorporation in the League. . . . Present the average Englishman with a choice between being part and parcel of a European Federation and maintaining a system of Anglo-American co-operation and he will inevitably choose the latter because of the manifold personal ties which unite the British people to their ‘American cousins’. Your Englishman may read deplorable things in his newspaper about American Senators twisting the lion’s tail; he will give them little heed or credence. For his feelings about America are not, as are his feelings about other countries, dependent on newspaper reports. They are based upon visits and letters from relations and friends across the Atlantic who speak the same language as he does and who share in the main his ideas and prejudices. It is for this reason among others that friendship with the United States must always be a cardinal point in British foreign policy, and it is this which precludes British participation in a continental grouping which might appear antagonistic to America. The true statesman will never present the British public with the lamentable dilemma of choosing between the two. . . .

“The fact that Britain is itself part of a kind of federation of free nations—the British Empire—strongly united in sentiment, perhaps destined to be more closely connected economically, is another and

#### ALL THE WAY

more obvious reason why my country could not enter into an exclusively European organisation. . . .

“These are not arguments against a sustained system of co-operation between European Powers including Great Britain and Ireland. They are simply facts which must be borne in mind in building up such a system. They are facts which reinforce my conviction that the way to start is to form, so to speak, a European section of the League. This might be by way of a permanent European Committee or some such device, called into being by the League’s authority and answerable to its Council or Assembly. It could deal in the first instance with all European affairs including, no doubt, European trade and commerce. It would be of the utmost value in facilitating international disarmament especially by land, since this is almost exclusively a European question, and it could supervise perhaps the working of other European sub-committees dealing with, for instance, such areas as the Baltic or the Balkans, or the Succession States of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. . . .

“How far developments of this kind are practicable, what should be the exact machinery to be created, and what should be its powers are questions which should be examined with the utmost care and deliberation before anything is done. But one condition must in any case be insisted on. The new organisation must work under the supervision and control of the Council and Assembly of the League and through the instrumentality of its Secretariat.”

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